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Sunscreen and ski gear

Springtime in Whistler is the perfect combination of sunny patios and world-class skiing PAGE 24

STOOGES COME STUMBLING BACK

CANADIAN ACTOR TALKS ABOUT HIS ROLE AND THE REVIVAL OF SLAPSTICK PAGE 19

VANCOUVER metro®

Wednesday, April 11, 2012

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'LUONG' ROAD TO REDEMPTION

Vancouver Canucks goalie Roberto Luongo and the rest of the team take the first step in their quest to avenge last year's loss in the Stanley Cup final. Vancouver Canucks open the 2012 playoffs at home to the L.A. Kings Wednesday night. Canucks fans embrace "most hated" label, page 4. NHL playoff preview, pages 29-30. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sudden death of gay activist

David Holtzman, a leader of numerous community groups and a champion for those living with HIV-AIDS, died of a heart attack this week while on vacation PAGE 3

Pickton inquiry 'disgusting'

Fifteen women's groups boycott inquiry, claiming it faces systemic racism and sexism, and calling it 'corrupt' and 'disgusting' PAGE 6

CBC slashes programming

Budget cuts and a $225-million shortfall make for some tough decisions PAGE 17

Van Gogh blooms in Ottawa

The infamous artist up close this spring at the National Gallery of Canada TRAVEL PAGE 25

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Gay activist dies on vacation

Remembered.
Holtzman led numerous community groups and campaigns, remembered as champion for underdogs

David Holtzman, a prominent community organizer and activist from Vancouver's gay community, died suddenly this week while on vacation with his partner in Palm Springs, Calif. He apparently suffered a heart attack, according to a source close to friends and family.

Holtzman was director of operations at Vancouver's Out On Screen Film & Video Society. He had previously been the executive director for A Loving Spoonful, which provides meals, nutritional support and counselling to people living with HIV-AIDS, and also briefly served as executive director for the Wilderness Committee in 2010.

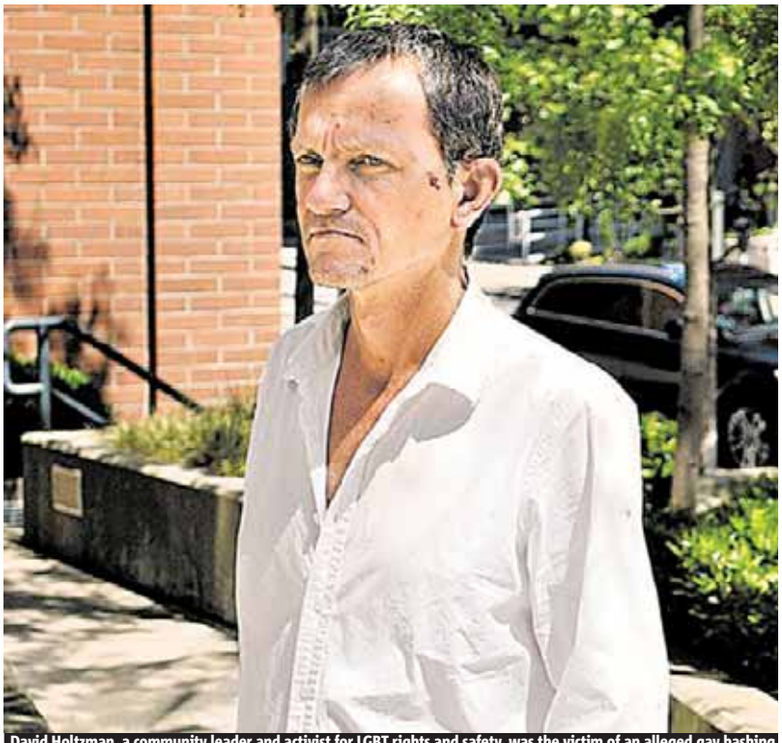
He had recently been in the news as one of two victims of a gay bashing alleged to have occurred in June. Two brothers accused of carrying out the vicious assaults on Holtzman and his partner outside their home pleaded not guilty on March 20.

Vancouver-West End MLA Spencer Chandra Herbert said Holtzman will be remembered for making the city a better place.

"It's very sad. He was a leader in the fight for equality, the fight for a funner and more vibrant city through just all sorts of events and things that he put on. And really for the underdog, even in his own personal fight, which I think was a big surprise for him, obviously with that trial still going on, or the judgment I guess still to be made there," said Chandra Herbert.

"Even before that happened to him I knew him as somebody who would lend a hand to anybody who was down on their luck or who just simply needed a hand up. David would be there to help."

Holtzman described himself in an online profile as someone with "a passion for collaboration and good facilitation." He spent five years in Jakarta, Indonesia, overseeing higher-education development programs for the World University Services of Canada, and was involved in Expo '86, as well as Rick Hansen's Man in Motion world tour. **KATE WEBB/METRO**



David Holtzman, a community leader and activist for LGBT rights and safety, was the victim of an alleged gay bashing in 2010. KYLE FARQUHARSON/METRO FILE

And B.C.'s Bad Boss Award goes to...

Members of the Employee Action Rights Network (EARN) present a certificate naming Vancouver Subway franchise owner Anil Dhawan B.C.'s first Bad Boss Award winner at Vancouver's Oakridge Mall on Tuesday. HANDOUT

The B.C. Federation of Labour has given the first ever Bad Boss Award to Anil Dhawan, an owner and manager of three Vancouver Subway franchises who allegedly asked workers to forgo overtime wages.

The BCFed's Employee Action Rights Network (EARN) said an employee at Dhawan's Oakridge Mall restaurant entered him in the Bad Boss Contest earlier this year, for what EARN called a "blatant violation of employment standards."

"We are asking the Ministry of Labour to launch an immediate investigation into Mr. Dhawan's operations and ensure workers receive the full wages they are owed," EARN spokesman Stephen Von Sychowski said in a statement.

A leaked contract stamped with the Subway logo asks employees to "acknowledge and agree to waive any overtime wages due to (their) request to work additional hours per week." A Ministry of Labour spokesperson said the Employment Standards Branch is investigating the allegations, but until now they haven't received any complaints about Dhawan.

Dhawan told Metro Tuesday afternoon the form was drafted by a senior manager at the Oakridge Mall location without his knowledge or consent.

"To my knowledge, no one has signed it, but, secondly, we don't use that form," he said.

"Anyone can make a form on a Word document, and it's just unfortunate that this labour group has got a hold of the form and they've painted a much different story than what actually exists."

The franchise owner said the Employment Standards Branch is welcome to check his records, which he claimed verify that he pays overtime in accordance with labour laws.

"I don't have any disgruntled employees that I'm aware of, but it's evident to me that someone has passed on this letter to the Federation of Labour. I'm not sure how," he added. **KATE WEBB/METRO**

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NEWS

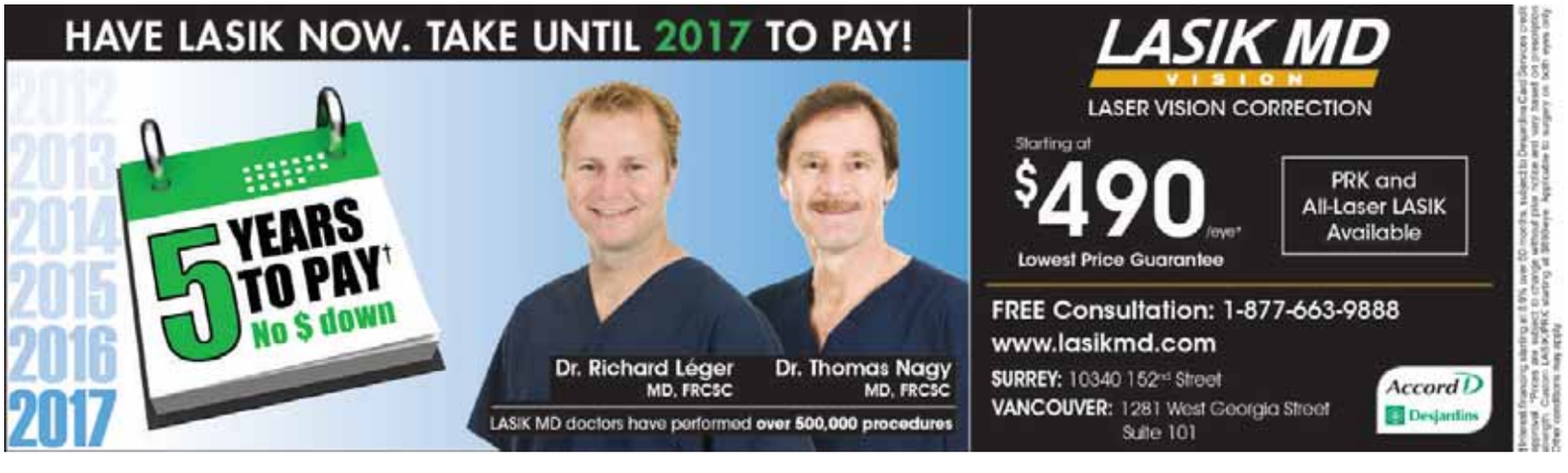
On the web

Support website for Trayvon's killer is real

A former attorney for George Zimmerman confirmed the authenticity of a new website that allows supporters to raise money for the neighbourhood-watch volunteer who has admitted to fatally shooting an unarmed black teen in Florida. Go to metronews.ca for the video and full story.

Mobile news

One of the best-kept secrets in television history has been revealed: The Simpsons creator Matt Groening has come clean on his inspiration for the animated hometown of Homer and family. Scan the code for the story.



The Vancouver Canucks have been called the "most hated team in the NHL" ever since their playoff run last year, and some Canucks fans are trying to get past all the negativity and "embrace the hate." PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Embracing the dark side

NHL playoffs. Canucks fans welcoming the ill feelings of people on the hate wagon

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
phylicia.torrevillas@metronews.ca

If you can't beat it, embrace it.

Some Vancouver fans are choosing to "embrace the hate" the Canucks have been getting since last year's playoff run and now that they are once again Canada's best hope for a Stanley Cup.

Canucks fan Dane Watson said the team has earned the "most-hated" tag because people just love to hate on good teams.

"I kind of find it entertaining how many people do hate the Canucks," Watson said. "The diehard Vancouver fans probably embrace it and they probably enjoy seeing these people all angry about our success."

Not winning the cup last year is also making it a little easy for people to taunt and look down on the team, he added, but it's easy to defend the team because of how well it's been doing the past few years.

Winning back-to-back Presidents' Trophies — not to mention clinching the Northwest Division title for the fourth consecutive season — hasn't helped the Canucks dodge the scorn from other players and fans.

In February, the Canucks were voted the most overrated team, at 24 per cent, in a Hockey Night in Canada player poll, while Maxim Lapierre topped a Sports Illustrated poll that asked 202 NHL players whom they most wanted to fight. Lapierre beat out the likes of the Rangers' Sean Avery and the Penguins' Matt Cooke.

Sean Zandberg, one of the writers for the Canucks blog Nucks Misconduct and a Canucks fan since 1982, said having players like Lapierre, Alex Burrows and Ryan Kesler who have been known for "yapping" and "getting in other players' skins" only fuels the hate wagon even more.

But he said almost every team has players like that and he thinks all the Canucks loathing is not justified at all.

Non-Canucks fans have expressed disdain over the team's "whiny and dirty tactics," from the Sedin twins' diving to Burrows' hair-pulling and finger-biting drama.

"They can say whatever they want," Zandberg said. "We have a good team and we're cheering for them anyways."

Fans of "Not Canada's Team" are hoping for the best to silence the haters.

"I just want the (Canucks) to win the Stanley Cup," Zandberg said.

Twitter

Canucks fans certainly #embracethehate over Twitter. Here are some of their comments:

@enthrottled: Dear rest of Canada, hate on the #Canucks Cheer 4 the Fla..er.. Oil..er..Jet..er..Map..er..Hab.. Well u get the Sens 4 now #embracethehate

@whatasaveluongo: So many people hate the Canucks haha #embracethehate

@CMoyls28: How many of my followers can show me come Canucks love? Way too many haters out there. Let's #embracethehate and take the cup this year!

@a_frilles: LOL Flames fans... cheering for the Kings. Funneh. #embracethehate #canucks

@Lukeantrim: Jelousy is a Sickness. #EmbraceTheHate #Canucks

@lariives: 2nd straight presidents trophy. 1st overall. #enoughsaid #EmbraceTheHate #canucks

Don't get duped by playoff-related scams, say VPD

Vancouver police are warning Canucks fans not to fall for hockey-related scams.

VPD spokesperson Const. Lindsey Houghton said people need to be cautious when buying tickets either in person or online during playoff time.

Last year, two victims in Vancouver were duped by scammers operating out of the U.S. and England.

In one case, a scammer pretended to be a realtor from California and used the name and address of a real realtor to look credible to the buyer.

"These suspects have the victims send the cash under this false name," Houghton said. "Once the money is sent, they ask the victim for the wire-transfer number and then a suspect will walk into any money-transfer office like Western Union in their country, and they can pick up the money in their own name."

He urged people to purchase tickets from a known retailer.

Most of the frauds are international in scope, making it hard to prosecute the con artists, Houghton added.

Another scam is the "pretend parking-lot attendant" scheme.

Houghton said this happens year-round but becomes more prevalent during the playoff frenzy.

These scammers pretend to be parking-lot staff, wearing orange reflective vests and holding cash and parking tickets to look legitimate, and stand at the entrance of unmanned public parking lots around Rogers Arena and the downtown area.

They approach people looking for parking and tell unsuspecting drivers that they can give them a ticket for cash.

"The trusting buyers later return to their vehicles to see they have been issued a parking ticket," Houghton said. "Don't fall for it.… If you have any doubts, walk the 20 steps to the parking meter, clunk in your change or use a credit card and buy the ticket yourself."

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Calling the odds

Odds to win the 2012 Stanley Cup (Bodog Sportsbook):

- Pittsburgh Penguins – 7/2
- Vancouver Canucks – 5/1
- New York Rangers – 15/2
- St. Louis Blues – 8/1
- Boston Bruins – 17/2
- Detroit Red Wings – 12/1
- Nashville Predators – 12/1
- Philadelphia Flyers – 15/1
- Chicago Blackhawks – 18/1
- San Jose Sharks – 20/1
- Los Angeles Kings – 22/1

NHL 12. Sign of things to come? EA simulation sees Canucks rule over Kings

The Vancouver Canucks are poised to dispatch the L.A. Kings, while the Ottawa Senators will be ousted in the first round of the NHL playoffs — if a simulation by the NHL 12 video game is accurate.

The latest instalment of the EA Sports hockey franchise also predicts the New Jersey Devils and Chicago Blackhawks will provide a pair of upsets.

The top-seeded Canucks will beat the Kings in six games in the Western Conference, according to the simulation, while the Senators, eighth in the East, will go down in five games to the top-ranked New York Rangers.

The Devils, seeded sixth in the Eastern Conference, will beat the third-seeded Florida Panthers 4-3. The Blackhawks, the sixth seed in the West, will oust the third-seeded Phoenix Coyotes 4-1.

The simulation was conducted using artificial intelligence that uses data from each team, such as player ratings and line combinations, and takes into account injuries and hot streaks.

NHL 12 was developed by EA Canada in Burnaby.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Policing. Answers sought after municipalities hit with RCMP wage hikes

The NDP is demanding answers from the B.C. government after it was revealed municipalities are on the hook for millions of dollars in RCMP wage increases as the result of a new policing agreement signed last month.

Public-safety critic Kathy Corrigan says Justice Minister Shirley Bond helped negotiate the 20-year policing deal with the federal government but never warned municipalities about the wage hikes, which she says could cost $8 million for Surrey alone.

She says federal Public Safety Minister Vic Toews claims he told the provinces about the wage increases twice during negotiations, and Bond has to explain why she didn't pass the information along if she knew about it.

Corrigan says if Bond didn't know, she needs to say how she missed the federal warnings.

Public Safety Minister Vic Toews greets RCMP officers in Surrey in March while announcing a new 20-year contract extension for the federal force's services in B.C. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO FILE

Premier Christy Clark is defending Bond, but says the justice minister isn't happy about this news.

Clark admits the wage increases will be tough for municipalities, but says under the new RCMP deal this type of surprise will never happen again.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Accidental 911 calls. Police say around 200 a day are pocket dials

A British Columbia emergency communications centre is urging people to be more careful with cellphones after more than 100,000 accidental 911 calls tied up phone lines last year in Metro Vancouver.

Based on a recent analysis of call statistics by E-Comm, an emergency centre responsible for dispatching services to police and fire departments, of the 110,000 accidental calls recorded in 2011, 70,000 were pocket dials and 40,000 were abandoned calls or hangups.

"I've had a lot of calls from Rogers Arena when the Canucks were playing," said Corey Kelso, E-Comm 911 call-taker. "I've heard pucks drop, I've heard the announcements, and I've actually heard Richard Loney singing the national anthem."

Quotable

"The safety of the public and first-responders is our priority."

Doug Watson, E-Comm's vice-president of 911 operations

According to E-Comm, these accidental calls are diverting valuable public-safety resources away from real emergency calls.

The company is urging the public to use keylocks, store cellphones in protective cases, and not pre-program 911.

KENDRA WONG/FOR METRO

Bagpipe ban lifted. Mayor says the pipes can come calling once again

The controversial ban on Scotland's most famous musical instrument, the bagpipe, has been lifted in the city of Vancouver, announced Mayor Gregor Robertson Tuesday.

After receiving complaints about noise levels, the city's street-performance permit program began refusing applications for acts that included drums, bongos, tambourines and bagpipes.

Upon further review of the permit program, Robertson said that city council will not support an outright ban on such instruments.

According to the mayor's blog, staff will continue to gather noise-level readings, monitor complaints, and work with musicians and performers to see how bagpipes can be permitted in a way that is acceptable to the public.

KENDRA WONG/FOR METRO

Lisa Yellow-Quill from the Women's Memorial March Committee speaks at the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs offices Tuesday. KENDRA WONG/FOR METRO

Groups continue to boycott inquiry

Missing women.
Fifteen groups allege probe faces systemic racism and sexism

KENDRA WONG
vancouver@metronews.ca

Some of the most prominent community groups representing aboriginal women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside are refusing to participate in the second phase of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, calling it "disgusting" and "corrupt," they said Tuesday.

The inquiry, which began in October 2011 was established to investigate the police mishandling of the Robert Pickton investigation, has been at the centre of controversy with critics claiming it is fundamentally flawed.

"We don't see how anything healthy or good can come out of the inquiry at this time because it is so tainted, corrupt and sick," said Lisa Yellow-Quill from the Women's Memorial March Committee. "It's replicating harms done to aboriginal women, and other marginalized women in this country."

Fifteen groups including the Union Gospel Mission, Pivot, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, Amnesty International and the Battered Women's Support Services have sent a letter to commissioner Wally Oppal stating they will boycott the public forums and study commission in the coming months, citing lack of witness protection, impossible timelines and conflict of interest as reasons for not participating.

"The Women's Equality and Security Coalition is deeply shocked by the way the inquiry has unfolded.... (We do) not wish to lend credibility by participating in a process that has become so profoundly flawed," said Hilla Kerner of the WESC.

The groups are also calling for a national royal commission into systemic racism, sexism and discrimination faced by aboriginal women in the inquiry.

Last month, Robyn Gervais, the lawyer representing aboriginal interests in the inquiry, resigned, claiming the inquiry failed to listen to marginalized witnesses.

Most recently, former commission staff alleged they encountered harassment, intimidation and conflict in the commission workplace. They inquiry's executive director John Boddie has been placed on leave.

Advance voting begins in B.C. byelections

Advance voting for the much-anticipated byelections in the Chilliwack-Hope and Port Moody-Coquitlam ridings are set to begin Wednesday and candidates say residents are hungry for representation.

"It has taken a long time for this byelection to be called," said Joe Trasolini, the NDP candidate in the Port Moody-Coquitlam riding. "There is a feeling of change in the air … we have to send a message to the province."

Both ridings have lacked representation since former Liberal MLA Iain Black for Port Moody-Coquitlam and Liberal MLA Barry Penner for Chilliwack-Hope resigned in October and January, respectively.

"People understand the importance of a dollar, they work hard for it and they want to make sure the government is managing it properly for them," said Dennis Marsden, the Liberal candidate in the Tri-Cities riding.

Christine Clarke is representing the Conservatives in the Port Moody-Coquitlam race.

John Martin, the Conservative candidate in the Fraser Valley riding, said the Liberals' days are numbered.

"People are fed up with the Liberals — they have to go," he said.

He acknowledged that voter turnout is notoriously low in byelections, but Martin hopes the need for change will draw voters out.

"There's a greater buzz because of the historical possibilities," he said. "It will be the first time in (many) years that the Liberals haven't had that seat. (We) are hoping it will be a Conservative seat after April 19."

Gwen O'Mahony is the NDP candidate while Laurie Throness is running under the Liberal banner.

Advancing voting begins Wednesday until Saturday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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Cancun	from $155 + taxes & fees $340
Huatulco	from $205 + taxes & fees $340
Puerto Plata	from $212 + taxes & fees $383
Los Angeles	from $269 + taxes & fees $106
Varadero	from $364 + taxes & fees $223
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Kananaskis May Long Weekend Family Special, 2 Nights — from $79◊ taxes & fees included

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Harrison Hot Springs
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INCLUDES accom on the shores of Harrison Lake. **ADD** 2-day car rental with unlimited mileage from $33 per day.

Banff 2 Nights — from $155 taxes & fees included

BONUS shuttle into town included. **UPGRADE** to 4-star accom from $20 per night. **ADD** evening wildlife safari from 45.

Victoria May Long Weekend
2 Nights — from $189 taxes & fees included

INCLUDES accom on the Inner Harbour over the long weekend. **ADD** whale watching from $104

Pender Harbour May Long Weekend Family Special, 2 Nights 4-Star — from $299◊ taxes & fees included

INCLUDES villa accom over the long weekend. Price per person based on family of 4. **ADD** 2-day minivan rental with unlimited mileage from $26 per day. **BOOK** this package based on double occupancy from $330.

Toronto Air + 4 Nights — from $519 + taxes & fees $226

INCLUDES downtown accom. **UPGRADE** to 4-star accom from $13 per night. **ADD** narrated harbour cruise from $23.

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Hong Kong Air + 7 Nights — from $865 + taxes & fees $422

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Buenos Aires Air + 8 Nights — from $1399 + taxes & fees $558

BONUS daily breakfast included. **UPGRADE** to 4.5-star accom from $63 per night. **ADD** Tigre Delta tour from $52.

USA

Anaheim
Family Special, Air + 3 Nights
from **$189◊**
+ taxes & fees $119

INCLUDES accom near theme parks. Price per person based on family of 4. **UPGRADE** to 4-star accom from $9 per night. **ADD** 3-day *Disneyland* Resort *Park Hopper* Bonus Ticket from $193/adult, $178/child (ages 3-9). **BOOK** this package based on double occupancy from $239.

Las Vegas Air + 3 Nights — from $199 + taxes & fees $117

INCLUDES accom on the Strip. **UPGRADE** to 4-star accom from $14 per night. **ADD** Champagne Rock Star Tour from $48.

San Francisco Air + 4 Nights — from $479 + taxes & fees $114

INCLUDES central accom. **UPGRADE** to 4-star accom from $57 per night. **ADD** Urban Safari with Alcatraz from $165.

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Air + 3 Nights 4-Star — from $859 + taxes & fees $127

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Cancun 7 Nights 4-Star	from $595 + taxes & fees $340
Riviera Maya 7 Nights 4-Star	from $737 + taxes & fees $335
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Alleged stalker

Quebecer begged actor to marry her, police say

A Canadian actress accused of stalking Alec Baldwin sent him a string of emails begging him to marry her, police say.

Genevieve Sabourin was arraigned on aggravated harassment and stalking charges after her arrest in New York City.

Police said Baldwin and Sabourin met a decade ago on a movie set.

Sabourin travelled from her home in Quebec to New York City, then began sending Baldwin desperate emails, police said.

Baldwin posted a Twitter message about the episode Tuesday, writing, "Isn't it odd when an accused stalker is in handcuffs, being taken away by the cops, yet smiles for the cameras?" THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Woman kidnapped

Man seeks to appeal his conviction

A New Brunswick man found guilty of abducting a woman and sexually assaulting her for almost a month argued Tuesday that his conviction and sentence should be overturned.

Romeo Cormier, 64, told the provincial Court of Appeal in Fredericton he was not properly represented by his lawyers and the trial judge made errors.

Cormier was sentenced to 18 years in jail last August for abduction and sexual assault.

The woman testified Cormier grabbed her at knifepoint outside a Moncton, N.B., shopping mall.

She was able to escape when Cormier left to go to a food bank.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Boeing 777

Korean jet lands at a B.C. Canadian Forces base after on-board incident

A Korean Airlines Boeing 777 has been diverted to Canadian Forces Base Comox on the east coast of Vancouver Island .

The jet was travelling from Vancouver International Airport when it was diverted. Base emergency services were activated.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mulcair gets a TV makeover: He cares ... just like Jack

The family man. Olivia Chow and the NDP launch a new ad that rejects any lurch to centre and stresses party continuity

New NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair: Family man. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Newly minted NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair is being introduced to Canadians as someone who will fight for ordinary families.

Just like his predecessor, Jack Layton, did.

The emphasis is on continuity, not change, in a new English television ad being launched by the federal NDP.

It features Layton's widow, NDP MP Olivia Chow, assuring viewers, "Jack's vision is in good hands."

During the seven-month leadership contest to choose Layton's successor, Mulcair was portrayed by his rivals as someone who would lurch the social-democratic party to the centre of the political spectrum, turning it into an imitation of the Liberal party.

Yet the English ad features a series of, well, ordinary Canadians expressing confidence that Mulcair will champion issues closest to their hearts.

"He'll fight for my family," a young mother says, packing groceries into her car.

"He cares if I make ends meet," a tool-toting tradesman tells the TV viewers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Miss Universe

Pageant opens up to transgender women

Transgender women will be allowed to participate in the Miss Universe beauty pageant next year, officials announced Tuesday. They have already ruled Vancouver's Jenna Talackova, 23, can vie for the crown this year.

She had a sex change four years ago after being born a male.

Now pageant officials say they are working on the language of the official rule policy change.

Initially, organizers in Canada disqualified Talackova from the 61st Miss Universe Canada pageant set for May, citing a rule that she must be "naturally born" a woman.

Talackova told ABC's Good Morning America she has a boyfriend and hopes to have children some day. She said, without elaborating, "Yes, I want to have two children." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Israel. Entry denied to pro-Palestinian activists — labelled 'provocateurs'

Israel vowed Tuesday to prevent the entry of hundreds of pro-Palestinian activists from Europe and North America expected to arrive in the country this weekend.

Israel calls them provocateurs who are intent on disturbing public order.

The activists are set to board flights to Israel with the aim of participating in demonstrations against Israeli policy in the West Bank.

Although organizers say all protests will be peaceful, Israeli officials said the activists would be deported.

"The provocateurs will be dealt with in a determined and quick way," said Israel's public security minister, Yitzhak Aharonovitch.

"If they arrive (in) Israel they will be identified, removed from the plane, their entry into Israel will be prevented and they will be moved to a detention facility until they are flown out of Israel."

Last July, Israel blocked a similar effort by preventing scores of activists from boarding Tel Aviv-bound flights in Europe, questioning dozens more upon arrival at the airport and denying entry to 69.

Protests to be peaceful

Israel has been jittery about large influxes of foreign activists since a naval raid on a Gaza-bound flotilla in May 2010 turned deadly.

- The Israeli navy and the activists have each accused each other of sparking

"They have the right to enter Palestine. It's not up to Israel to forbid anybody from coming into Palestine," said Abdelfattah Abusrour, a local organizer.

Organizers say this week's mission, sponsored by an umbrella group called "Welcome to Palestine," seeks to draw attention toward Israeli travel restriction on Palestinians.

Visitors can reach the West Bank only through Israeli-controlled crossings, either through international airports or the land border with Jordan.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syria launches fresh attacks on rebel areas

Syrian refugees at a camp in Reyhanli, Turkey. GERMANO ASSAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syria defies ceasefire. France says Syria 'lying' about withdrawing troops from rebel areas such as province of Homs

Syrian troops defied a UN-brokered ceasefire plan Tuesday, launching fresh attacks on rebellious areas.

But special envoy Kofi Annan said there was still time to salvage a truce that he described as the only chance for peace.

More than one year into the Syrian uprising, the international community has nearly run out of options for halting the slide toward civil war. On Tuesday, Annan insisted his peace initiative remains "very much alive" — in part because there is no viable alternative.

The UN has ruled out any military intervention of the type that helped bring down Libya's Moammar Gadhafi, and several rounds of sanctions and other attempts to isolate President Bashar Assad have done little to stop the bloodshed.

Facing a deadline to pull back its tanks and troops, the Syrian government had said it was withdrawing from certain areas, including the rebellious central province of Homs.

But France called the claims a "flagrant and unacceptable lie," and activists said there was no sign of a withdrawal.

Residents of Homs reported some of the heaviest shelling in months.

"Hundreds of mortar rounds and shells were falling around all day," resident Tarek Badrakhan told the Associated Press.

The UN Security Council strongly backed Annan, with all 15 members — including Syrian allies China and Russia — expressing "deep concern" over the failure by Damascus to withdraw its troops and heavy equipment.

The conflict is among the most explosive of the Arab Spring. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syria defiant

Thirteen months of bloodshed.

- The UN estimates more than 9,000 people have been killed since the uprising began, and the toll climbs every day.
- Syria's main opposition group said that about 1,000 people have been killed in regime attacks in the past eight days alone, a figure that could not be independently confirmed.
- Western leaders have pinned their hopes on Kofi Annan's diplomatic pressure.

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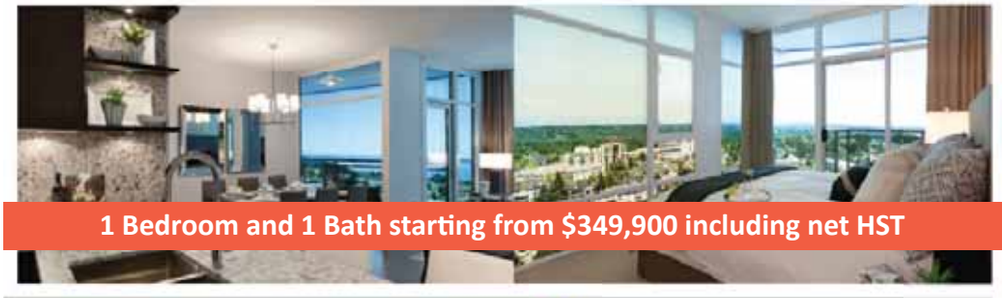

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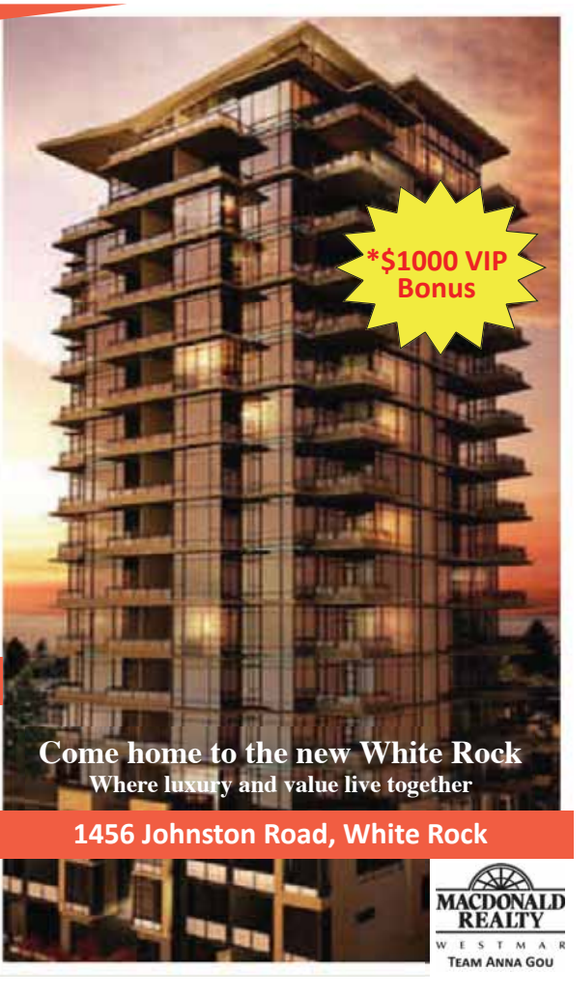

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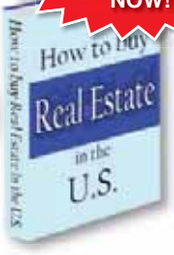

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Macs now susceptible to viruses: Experts

Infected. Virus called Flashback or Flashfake has hit an estimated 100,000 Apple users in Canada, nearly one million worldwide

Mac users can no longer be blithely indifferent about the risks of viruses and cyber-attacks, warn computer-security experts.

A widespread virus called Flashback or Flashfake has hit hundreds of thousands of Apple computers worldwide — including an estimated 100,000 in Canada — and is widely considered to be just the first of many malicious attacks that will continue to ensnare Mac users.

Virus creators have long been targeting the growing numbers of Mac users and the fact Flashback/Flashfake hit an estimated one per cent of all Macs worldwide makes the launch of this virus a "historic event," said Mikko Hypponen, chief research officer with security company F-Secure.

"Mac users can't just do like they've always done, which is to laugh at the Windows users who had to worry about viruses because they didn't. I think it's a wake-up call for Mac users," Hypponen said.

Word of the virus first broke out of Russia last week, with an estimated 600,000 computers affected worldwide.

Virus

"I think it's the first of many more to come. I think the happy days of virus-free Macs are behind us."

Mikko Hypponen, chief research officer with security company F-Securecupation

The first wave of infections were linked to a fraudulent pop-up prompt users received on websites to install a new version of Adobe Flash. Later, hackers identified a security hole in the Java platform that allowed users to get infected without clicking on anything at all.

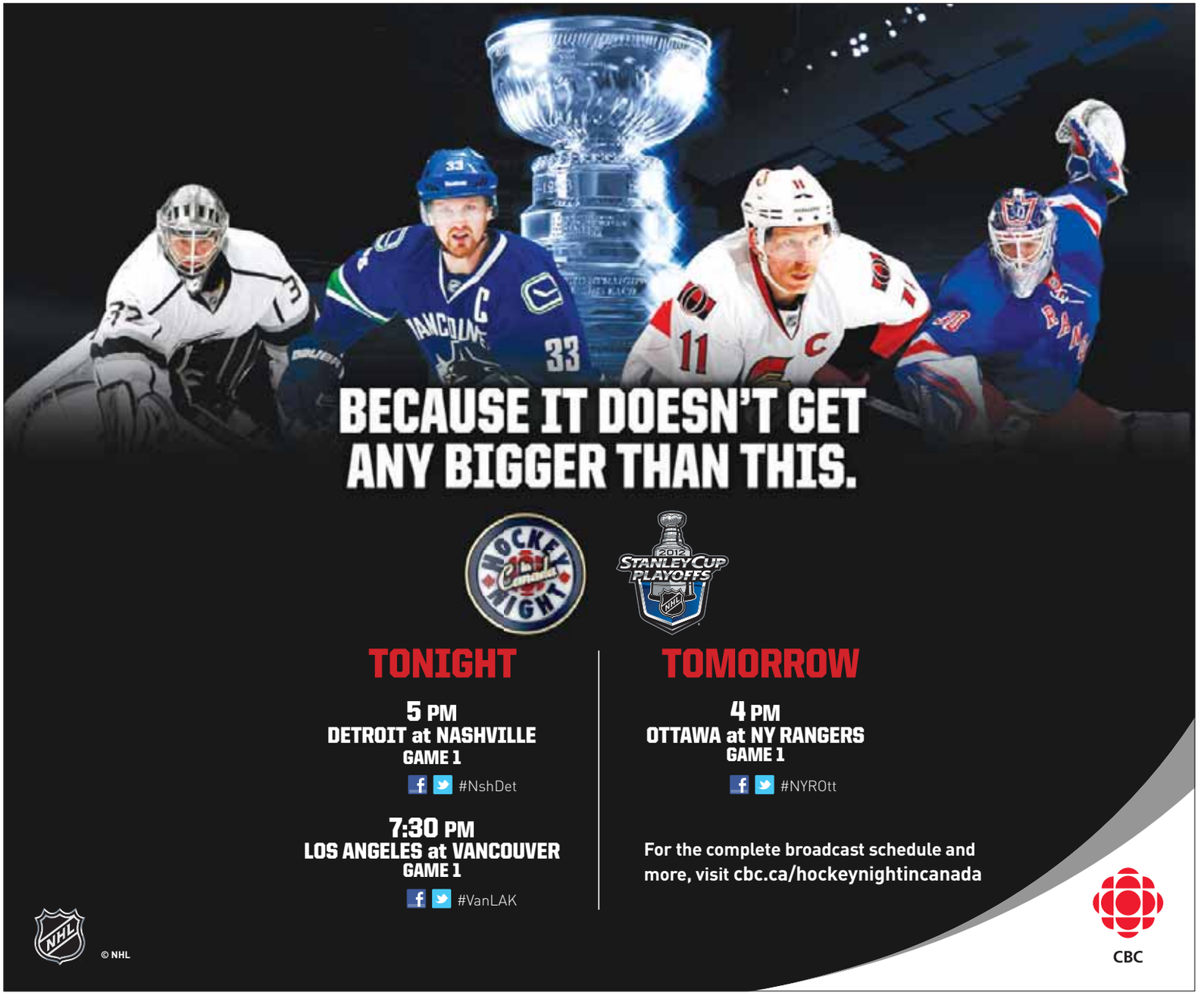
"The pages that would infect you could be perfectly normal websites, sites that you visit all the time, except now they had been hacked," explained Hypponen.

"But the hackers made no visible modifications, everything looked normal. But it loaded a Java (program) in the background and that (program) exploited the vulnerability."

Users infected by the virus could have their computers controlled and watched remotely by hackers and are vulnerable to having personal and banking information stolen.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mac users can no longer laugh off the virus worries usually haunting PC users, experts warn. MATTHEW LLOYD/GETTY IMAGES



Court. Edwards' trial expected to set precedent for campaign donations

John Edwards, former U.S. senator and two-time Democratic presidential candidate, is making the biggest courtroom gamble of his life — that a jury will clear him of alleged campaign finance violations and keep him from being sent to prison.

Jury selection for Edwards' criminal trial is set to begin Thursday in the Middle District of North Carolina.

U.S. District Court Judge Catherine C. Eagles, who was appointed in 2010 by President Barack Obama, will preside. She said she expects the proceedings to last about six weeks.

Edwards, who declined an interview request through his lawyers, was indicted by a federal grand jury last year on six felony and misdemeanour counts related to nearly $1 million secretly provided by wealthy campaign donors to help hide his pregnant mistress, Rielle Hunter, as he sought the White House in 2008.

If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison and as much as $1.5 million in fines.

"What I know with complete and absolute certainty is I didn't violate campaign laws and I never for a second believed I was violating campaign laws," Edwards said in October.

Former presidential candidate John Edwards in July 2011. GERRY BROOME/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/FILE

Regardless of the outcome, the coming trial in USA v. Johnny Reid Edwards is sure to set legal precedents for what constitutes a campaign donation under federal law. A key issue will be whether Edwards knew about the payments made on his behalf by his national campaign finance chairman, the late Texas lawyer Fred Baron, and campaign donor Rachel "Bunny" Mellon.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lawyers withdraw counsel after teen's shooter disappears

Website authenticity. George Zimmerman created website to solicit money for legal fees, living expenses, his lawyers confirmed

Attorneys for the U.S. neighbourhood watch volunteer who fatally shot an unarmed black teen said Tuesday they have withdrawn as counsel because they have lost contact with him.

Attorney Craig Sonner and Hal Uhrig told a news conference they haven't heard from George Zimmerman since Sunday. They said that against their advice, Zimmerman contacted the special prosecutor who will decide if he should face charges.

Uhrig said his legal team is concerned about Zimmerman, who he said is "not doing well emotionally" and may be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

This is an image from the website therealgeorgezimmerman.com. George Zimmerman's former attorney confirmed the authenticity of the website, which allows supporters to raise money for Zimmerman. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Earlier Tuesday, Sonner confirmed the authenticity of a new website that allows supporters to raise money for living expenses and lawyers for the 28-year-old man who has admitted to fatally shooting Trayvon Martin.

All the money raised from the site, therealgeorgezimmerman.com, will go to Zimmerman, said Sonner.

Zimmerman says he shot 17-year-old Martin in self-defence after following the teenager in a Florida gated community.

He said he was returning to his truck when the teen attacked him.

Ben Crump, an attorney for Martin's family, said they're concerned that Zimmerman could be a flight risk if he is charged with a crime.

"At this point, we're just concerned that nobody knows where he is at. Nobody knows how to get to him," Crump said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Busted

U.S. bride accused of faking cancer for money

Strangers donated the beautifully embroidered wedding dress, the rings, the honeymoon timeshare in Aruba. They acted quickly, too, because the bride was dying of cancer. Or so she said.

The New York state attorney general's office said Tuesday that Jessica Vega, 25, has been indicted on charges of fraud and grand larceny for getting her "dream wedding" by falsely claiming she was dying of leukemia.

"By pretending to have a terminal illness, Vega inexcusably took advantage of the community's hearts and minds and profited off of their generosity," said Attorney General Eric Schneiderman. "Our office will hold this individual accountable for fleecing the public through lies and deception."

Vega was arrested in Virginia on April 3, extradited to New York and arraigned Friday. She pleaded not guilty.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Breivik's legal defence team: They argue he is not competent to stand trial. HEIKO JUNGE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Norway shooter is sane: Report

New assessment. Accused of killing 77, Breivik saw himself as crusader against Islam

When Anders Behring Breivik goes on trial next week, both the prosecution and the defence will say he killed 77 people in a bomb and shooting massacre that jolted the world's image of terrorism.

The only question now is whether the self-styled anti-Muslim militant was sane when he did it — and after a new psychiatric assessment Tuesday, even that may no longer be in dispute.

"Our conclusion is that he (was) not psychotic at the time of the actions of terrorism and he is not psychotic now," Terje Toerrissen, one of the psychiatrists who examined Breivik in prison, told The Associated Press.

Anders Behring Breivik
HEIKO JUNGE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The twin attacks on July 22 — a bomb in Oslo's government district followed by a shooting spree at the governing Labor Party's youth camp outside the capital — brutally shocked Norway and reminded the West of terror threats other than al-Qaida.

The blond, blue-eyed gunman surrendered to police on a lakeside island where the bodies of his many teenage victims lay scattered. He claimed he was the Islamic terror group's antithesis, a modern-day crusader waging a war against Islam in Europe.

Breivik confessed to the attacks but rejected criminal guilt, saying he had acted to protect Norway from being overrun by Muslims by targeting the left-leaning political establishment he claimed had betrayed the country with liberal immigration policies.

The psychiatric report presented to the Oslo district court on Tuesday backed up Breivik's own claim that he is sane, and contradicted an earlier assessment that declared him psychotic and suffering from paranoid schizophrenia. That first diagnosis was met with widespread criticism, prompting the court to order the second review.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Santorum ends bid for GOP nomination

Drops out. Departure from presidential race leaves Romney as likely nominee

Rick Santorum, the staunch social conservative who climbed from the basement of the polls to give Republican front-runner Mitt Romney a run for his money in the party's unpredictable presidential race, has ended his campaign.

"While this presidential race is over for me, and we will suspend our campaign effective today, we are not done fighting," Santorum said in Gettysburg, Pa.

"We are going to continue to fight for the Americans who stood up and gave us that air under our wings."

Rick Santorum
GENE J. PUSKAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Santorum, who was facing a tough battle against Romney in his home state of Pennsylvania in the Republican primary on April 24, launched a tenacious campaign against the Mormon millionaire to become his No. 1 threat in the race.

The former Pennsylvania senator's departure from the race all but assures Romney will get the nomination. Santorum was the only candidate who stood a chance of preventing Romney from amassing the 1,144 delegates needed to seal the nomination before the Republican convention in August.

Romney praised Santorum in a statement, calling him an "able and worthy competitor" and an "important voice" in the party.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama: Let millionaires pay higher taxes

U.S. President Barack Obama made a populist pitch in Boca Raton, Fla., on Tuesday that's resonating with many Americans: Millionaires, he said, should pay taxes at the same rate as the middle class. The president is pushing for the so-called Buffett rule, named after billionaire investor Warren Buffett, an Obama supporter who has called for tax hikes on the wealthy after famously observing last year that his secretary pays tax at a higher rate than he does. CAROLYN KASTER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kindergarten

Stepdad busted by show-and-tell

The stepfather of a five-year-old Bridgeport, Conn., boy who brought 50 packets of heroin to show-and-tell was arrested after going to the school in search of the drugs, police said Tuesday.

The student went to kindergarten Monday with his stepfather's jacket and pulled out the drugs in 10 small plastic bags when it came time for his presentation. The principal called police, and Santos Roman, 35, was arrested after arriving at the school.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cocky bird

Ironic rooster fears nothing

Nobody seems to know where he came from, but a local newspaper in Collierville, Tenn., reports a red rooster first showed up about three months ago and has been a daily visitor ever since at Gus' Fried Chicken in Collierville.

He's been known to cross a busy street, but most often crows from a fenced field across the street from the restaurant.

Collierville Animal Services has been trying to catch him.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

China

Arrest for illegal ultrasounds

Police in China have arrested a woman for performing ultrasound tests in the back seats of cars and illegally telling mothers the gender of their fetus, state media said Tuesday.

It is forbidden in China to tell expectant parents what sex their child will be because the practice has encouraged parents with a traditional preference for sons to abort female fetuses, skewing the ratio of boys to girls.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Driver passed out

Boy stops school bus safely

A 13-year-old student in Milton, Wash. grabbed the wheel of his school buts Monday after the driver lost consciousness. Jeremy Wuitschick removed the keys and the bus slowly came to a stop against the curb. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Feeding your taste for space

An astronaut enjoys green tea and almonds — before he is subjected to spirulina and stinky cheese. CONTRIBUTED

What's on the menu in the cosmic diner?
Algae slime and spicy, smelly foods ... but also some normal dishes, freeze-dried

ANTHONY JOHNSTON
Metro World News

When budding space tourists prepare to step aboard their commercial cosmic flight, what can they expect as their in-flight meal?

"Plenty of pungent, spicy and piquant food," says food scientist Robin Fegen, who specializes in preparing space cuisine for food enthusiasts.

Fegen, 26, is the director of the Robin Collective, a London-based group of entrepreneurs that hosts experimental food banquets for trend-hungry yuppies.

After collaborating with an astronaut and a space-nutrition expert at a recent science fair, some of Fegen's dishes have been "certified" as potential food for cosmic travel, he says.

Out-of-this-world flavours

"We recommend serving a very strong cheese that has a powerful taste, as in space you lose your normal sense of smell.... Other favourites include anything doused with chili and garlic."
Robin Fegen, the Robin Collective

"Each food tries to overcome eating problems that can crop up in space," says Fegen.

"For example, we recommend serving a very strong cheese that has a powerful taste, as in space you lose your normal sense of smell."

Eighty-five to 90 per cent of taste is controlled by your olfactory organs and at zero-gravity molecules in the air don't spread out in the same way.

"Other favourites include anything doused with chili and garlic."

As refrigerators use a lot of electrical power, they are a no-no in space. Instead, food is irradiated, dehydrated or freeze-dried for preservation.

"The good thing is that most dishes on Earth can be prepared into 'flight-ready' meals," NASA food scientist Michele Perchonok tells Metro.

"Unfortunately, having pizza in space is impossible, as each component — wheat, sauce and cheese — requires at least partial gravity to prepare."

So, in space, while you sacrifice some foods, you can try new ones.

Spirulina, a green algae that is rich in protein and B vitamins, is touted as a future space crop by the European Space Agency's project MELiSSA, which researches growing food in potential lunar bases on Mars.

But as Fegen describes, "It's what I call an algal slime that tastes like a dirty fish tank."

Not over the moon for stinky cheese

Anthony Johnston takes a taste.
ANTHONY JOHNSTON/METRO WORLD NEWS

I paid Robin Fegen a visit to try out his homemade space food.

First on the sampling menu is spirulina, that brownish-greenish algae that's packed with protein and B vitamins.

I got around that nasty "dirty, fish-tank" taste by eating it in a thick goo of chocolate.

The cocoa was overwhelming, while the spirulina gave a bit of a tingle on the tongue.

With gusto, I tried the algae on its own — more tingling, but this messy powder-like algae leaves a stench only a fisherman can love.

Next on the menu was chili "caviar."

No doubt inspired by the Russian space-trekking aristocracy, this dish has all the texture and complexion of real caviar — only it's made out of some brown algae and is hot 'n' spicy.

Just like caviar, expect that surprise bursting-bubble sensation on your tongue, and then a powerful pow of pepper striking your taste buds. I would still prefer to sneak on some ketchup.

Curiously, I noted that U.S. astronauts have the hots for chili, while Russian cosmonauts prefer lashings of garlic.

The stronger the flavour, the more likely you'll taste it, say space foodies.

Well, I can't say I agree with that extra-strong Stilton cheese.

If you like eating unwashed socks, tuck in. I'll stick to the spirulina, thank you.

ANTHONY JOHNSTON/
METRO WORLD NEWS

Q&A

Michele Perchonok
ANTHONY JOHNSTON/METRO WORLD NEWS

They don't just eat from tubes

A Q&A with NASA food-scientist Michele Perchonok.

When you're up in space, are you stuck with the same food all the time?
Not at all. Right now we prepare over 180 food types; we can feed a crew with three meals a day for eight to 10 days without repeating the same meal twice.

So what type of food do NASA's astronauts eat?
Basically any food can be eaten up there, but they need to be processed so that they're not easily spoiled and can be eaten at zero-gravity. Contrary to what people may think, astronauts don't really eat puréed, condensed foods straight from a tube. The Apollo crew did, but they were only in flight for a few days. When you're up in space on longer missions, you have to have more acceptable meals. There is also a lot of psychology involved in eating there — many astronauts seek "comfort food" like macaroni and cheese that they might not normally eat on Earth.

You pick the foods astronauts get to eat. Do they have a say in it?
In fact, they do — after each mission, a crew member is debriefed and they can suggest what new foods they can eat. After enough requests from crew members, we added vegetarian chili and Caribbean jerk chicken to our menu.

ANTHONY JOHNSTON/
METRO WORLD NEWS

In Metro Thursday

- **We reveal the Canadian finalist for our Metro Race for Space contest.**

More at metronews.ca

- **"Life-changing":** Businessman Gregory Olsen dishes on being a space tourist.
- **Science fiction:** Scientists delve into the plausand implausible of space movies.

Axe falls on programs as CBC begins to make cuts

Media. World-affairs radio program Dispatches and CBC News Network's Connect with Mark Kelley cancelled

Big budget cuts at the CBC are putting "everything" on the chopping block — including hit shows Republic of Doyle and Heartland, programming boss Kirstine Stewart said Tuesday, as the public broadcaster axed CBC News Network's Connect with Mark Kelley and CBC Radio's Dispatches.

Tough decisions about how to manage a $225-million shortfall will include shaving six existing or planned shows from the broadcaster's TV lineup, said Stewart, executive vice-president of CBC's English Services.

"We are making those decisions next week and we've got some pretty strong criteria to make those decisions," Stewart said after CBC staff were briefed on cuts in an internal meeting.

Staff learned Tuesday that CBC Television's programming and news departments will bear the brunt of cuts planned over the next three years. They include shuttered news bureaus in Africa and South America as well the elimination of 88 news jobs.

"It's not a good day for CBC," said Marc-Philippe Laurin, president of the Canadian Media Guild's CBC branch. "Canadians are really going to see a difference on the TV screen and hear a difference on CBC Radio."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Consumer credit

Canadians yet to act on debt despite intentions: Reports

More Canadians acknowledge they may be reaching the upper limits on borrowing but they have yet to act on it, two new reports suggest.

A survey released Tuesday by accounting firm PwC found that 63 per cent of Canadians said they wanted to decrease their debt levels over the next year — up 4.5 per cent from a year earlier — and many said they were ready to cut back on discretionary spending.

But in a separate report based on actual spending patterns, Moneris Solutions found that consumers had yet to act on their intentions.

The fresh data showed that consumer credit and debit-card spending in Canada continued to grow. For the first three months of 2012, spending was up 5.34 per cent and it appeared to be climbing, with spending in March up 6.76 per cent.

The data did not include financing for homes, however, the largest part of household debt.

The seemingly contradictory findings suggest Canadians have made the intellectual leap on spending, but have yet to feel the pinch of debt payments in their pocketbooks.

That is borne out by another finding in the PwC survey — Canadians may say they want to cut back, but two-thirds of respondents also said they were comfortable with their current debt level and fairly secure in their jobs.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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TSX 11,935.29 (-83.21)

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GOOD DAY SON SHINE

JUST SAYIN'
Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca/justsaying

James McCartney
JASON MERRITT/GETTY IMAGES

Sean Lennon CRAIG BARRITT/GETTY IMAGES

Dhani Harrison
ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

Zak Starkey KATY WINN/GETTY IMAGES

Very Bad Idea Department: James McCartney, son of Paul the Beatle, was caught musing out loud the other day about forming a band composed exclusively of the sons of former Beatles: himself, Sean Lennon (John), Dhani Harrison (George) and Zak Starkey (Ringo).

James, cruelly described by the Telegraph as a "plumper, sadder, balder" version of his famous dad, told the BBC he fantasizes about being better than the Beatles. At 34, he better hurry. In fact, the whole (potential) act is in danger of geezering out before it gets started.

Sean Lennon is 36, Dhani Harrison is 33, and reluctant Beatle 2.0 Zak Starkey is 46. No wonder he's reluctant. At his age you like to be in bed by 10, which is not a rock-'n'-roll time zone. Zak is in danger of engendering Beatles 3.0: The Grand-Kids Are All Right.

There are a host of Beatle larvae waiting in the wings if these four don't want to play nice together, but they're equally venerable. Julian Lennon is 49 and plays in a band called AARP (just kidding) and Jason Starkey is a slightly more sprightly 44.

The interesting thing is that all these old guys are musicians. Less interesting, perhaps, is that, all together, their records have sold fewer copies than any of the other No. 1 hits generated by their Fab Fathers in their glory days.

Lest we forget, an album called 1, which is a compilation of all 27 of the Beatles' No. 1 hits, released in 2000, is still the biggest-selling album of the 21st century, with 31 million copies sold by the end of 2009. The Beatles are the only group to have the best-selling record in two decades: Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band dominated the '60s and 1 dominated the 2000s.

Into this epic tale wanders the warmed-over DNA of the next generation. So far, without much distinction. The most remarkable thing about their collective genius is a knack for weird band names, such as: thenewno2s, Ghost of a Sabre Tooth Tiger, Musty Jack Sponge and, my personal favourite, the Exploding Nudists. Nope. Never heard of any of them either.

One or two of the 2.0 Beatles have enjoyed individual success: Zak Starkey has been a drummer for the Who and Oasis, which can be viewed as the most successful Beatles tribute band to date. Sean and Julian Lennon had their moments, but none of those moments holds a candle to Imagine.

If the boys weren't British, this could be a Greek tragedy in which the sons are crushed by the mythic reputations of their fathers. But it's hard to feel sorry for the heirs of men who sold more than a billion records.

Even if they sing out of tune, they'll get by with a little help from their dads.

Guest hails from the Ice Age

KIN CHEUNG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

42,000 years old

Born in the Ice Age, returns with tell-all

The most well-preserved baby mammoth, named Lyuba, is displayed at a press preview in Hong Kong Tuesday.

The one-month-old baby mammoth of the Ice Age died 42,000 years ago and was preserved in the ice. Lyuba was found by a reindeer herder in the permafrost of the Yamal Peninsula, Siberia, in 2007.

According to the Daily Mail, she is thought to have died in a mudslide at one month old.

The mud essentially "pickled" the mammoth.

"She was doing great, very healthy. She just had this terrible misfortune," paleontologist Dan Fisher, of the University of Michigan, told the news agency.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Research

10,000

Siberia-based scientists say they hope that studying the mammoth will help explain what caused mammals from the Ice Age to vanish about 10,000 years ago.

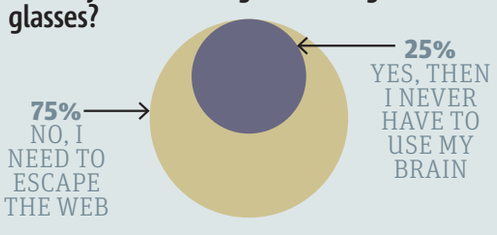
Meets her match

- She will be exhibited in Hong Kong from April 12 to May 10.
- According to MSNBC, another young mammoth, named Yuka, with strawberry-blond hair, was revealed to the world last week.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Would you wear Google's new digital glasses?



Twitter

@daniellebriana: Pens fans may have to band together with Canucks fans and create one body of those who are hated just to annoy everyone.

@stats87: The Canucks are hated in Canada, yet two separate polls during last years playoffs show 60+% support and 70+% support.

@dandoan: Playoff time, cue the (CDN media) trying to make the Canucks the most hated NHL team

@RocksStacey: Canucks: most hated CDN team?! Get outta my 'granola tavern', Toronto Sun! There's no room on our electric hybrid bandwagon anyway.

@CrownRoyal22: I can't believe some media are trying to push the hated Canucks thing again. At least come up with something new this time around.

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In Focus

Some classic Stooge-filled flicks

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

The Three Stooges — Larry Fine, Curly Howard and brother Moe Howard were the most famous incarnation — "nyuk! nyuk! nyuked!" their way through 220 slapstick movies in a career that spanned the heyday of vaudeville to the 1970s.

This weekend a new trio says "Hello! Hello! Hello!" in The Three Stooges, a Farrelly Brothers directed comedy. But if it's classic Stoogisms you're looking for, check out these movies:

The story of Hoi Polloi was so effective the trio recycled it twice more in the films Half-Wits Holiday and Pies and Guys.

Disorder in the Court casts the boys as star witnesses at the murder trial of their friend, a nightclub dancer.

Curly's favourite film was A Plumbing We Will Go, which featured the guys as plumbers hired to fix a leak in a mansion.

Chris Diamantopoulos, centre, leads the Stooges in the latest version of The Three Stooges franchise. HANDOUT

The lasting effect of physical comedy

The Three Stooges return to the big screen. Chris Diamantopoulos speaks to Metro about his role and the return of slapstick films

STEVE GOW
scene@metronews.com

There'll be a lot of eyes on the Farrelly Brothers' The Three Stooges.

Not only has the Friday release been a long time in construction, but the Hall Pass filmmakers insist the movie's a dedicated love letter to the slapstick legends. We caught up to Toronto-born actor Chris Diamantopoulos (TV's 24) to discuss playing the Stooges senseless skipper, Moe Howard.

I know you were a fan but why did you love the Stooges?

It just comes from watching them at such an early age and knowing that my parents loved them. I started watching them when I was five or six years old … there were about 50 or 60 shorts that I knew off by heart and when my parents would want entertainment, I would just recite the whole episodes for them in the summers in Greece (because) we didn't have a TV.

Why do you think physical comedy is so endearing?

There's something universal and timeless when done right about somebody falling, slipping, randomly being hit or poked if it's instigated the right way and if the poke or hit is warranted.

It's just funny — no matter what language you speak and what era, again if it's instigated the right way — it's all about set up, pay off and timing.

The original Stooges are often considered guy's comedy. How is this different?

You're right in saying that men love the Stooges. Although it's funny — going to screenings and talking to people who've seen the movie, I'll tell you the pervading message that I'm getting is that it's the women that are falling in love with this movie…what this movie has that I think will definitely attract women is heart. It's so very emotional. The message is simple but it's really, really sweet.

More quotes

See what Chris Diamantopoulos had to say on a wide variety of subjects.

- **Dressing up for the audition.** "When I found out about the audition, there was a memo that said 'do not arrive in character,' this is a modern take on the Stooges," said Diamantopoulos. "I thought that's stupid, I can't go in and be Moe looking like me."
- **The potential comic superstars.** "They never really got their just desserts," said Diamantopoulos. "By today's standards, especially if back when they were around there was social networking, The Stooges would've been mega-superstars."
- **The Look of Moe.** "There's this term — physiognomy — which basically means the way you're face looks affects how you sound so I had to look that way."

2 SCENE

Scene in brief

Jolie taking on famous villain role

Angelina Jolie is turning wicked as one of Disney's most famous villains in Maleficent, a live-action twist on Sleeping Beauty that's set for release just under two years from now. Walt Disney Studios announced Monday that Maleficent is due in theatres on March 14, 2014. The film will spell out the back story of the evil enchantress in Disney's animated classic Sleeping Beauty.

On the web

Kathleen Turner says Winnipeg play taught her she wasn't "born to play ingenue"

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Maggie Grace in Lockout HANDOUT

Grace under fire

Maggie Grace. Lost actress talks about her new role in Lockout and her accidental ascent as an action star

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Maggie Grace wants to make it clear that while her eye is tearing up, it's not because of anything anyone said. "I'm not crying. I just did a little damage [on set] last night," she says. "I just injured my eye a little bit. I didn't want people to think I was just so emotional."

And then, to undermine her own point, Grace then launches into a tearful speech about how wonderful Lockout co-star Guy Pearce is before breaking down laughing.

Grace, who first rose to fame as the pampered Shannon on Lost, has been following an interestingly physical track with her film career, which is something she hadn't expected.

"It's funny, it's become kind of a theme for me — a string of action movies," she says. "I just wrapped Taken 2 — and I was the girl who would lock myself in the locker room and cry after gym class. So it's just funny what life brings you."

Her latest film, the sci-fi caper Lockout, is a part of that action-heavy trend. "I pretty much looked like a dalmatian," she says about her bruised appearance after filming was completed last autumn in Serbia. Not that she's complaining, of course.

"We arrived in Serbia to start training a little bit early with the wires and do some combat training, so that was really helpful. And also a lot of fun. Probably the closest I'll get to being a trapeze artist myself," she remembers.

And while so much work in the action genre may seem like a happy accident to her, Grace doesn't feel the same way about acting in general.

"I never understand those 'tripped and fell' stories. I don't know how that works," she says, referring to actors who claim they found their vocation by chance.

"Maybe it sounds sort of modest or something, I don't know. But I feel like I've worked really hard to get where I am, and I'm pretty proud of it."

'Don't I know you from...?'

With all the travelling she does — and with parts in two beloved franchises (Lost and Twilight) — Maggie Grace is often stopped by fans.

- **So what's she recognized for most these days?** "Usually Taken lately. For a long time it was Lost, and that still comes up. Those are pretty hard-core fans, the Losties," she says. "But Taken, it's pretty funny. Especially in airports, of course."

Willem Dafoe stalks tigers Down Under

The Hunter. Actor plays a mercenary sent by a biotech company to hunt a sacred animal — that may or may not be extinct

STEVE GOW
scene@metronews.ca

Filming The Hunter was far from a cinematic cakewalk for Willem Dafoe who was forced to endure the Tasmanian wilderness and even a tumultuous blizzard. But the versatile actor wouldn't have it any other way.

"Who wants to make an easy movie?" the two-time Oscar-nominated film veteran quipped while promoting the drama. "You want to make good movies and hope they come gracefully but easy usually doesn't lend itself well to making interesting things."

Always on the lookout for challenging roles, The Hunter casts Dafoe as a mercenary sent Down Under by a biotech corporation to hunt the assumed-to-be extinct Tasmanian tiger — considered sacred by locals.

"You hear of Tasmanian devils and that cartoon character pops into your head. I'm embarrassed to say I knew very little about it," laughed Dafoe, admitting he wasn't originally sure if the creature was even historically real.

"There are sightings all the time because I think people hope that there's some sign that they can recapture something of the past that's been destroyed by colonization and development."

While his character in The Hunter (in theatres April 13) struggles with the morality and demands of the wilderness and landscape, Dafoe insists it's not necessarily the message of any film that attracts him but strictly the strength of the role.

"The questions that are raised in the film — I don't know those," said Dafoe. "I'm always attracted to being the odd man out and this is a very Australian story and I play a foreigner; I play the guy from out of town that comes in and that's an interesting place to be in the function of a film because you become the go-between between the audience and this world."

Something of a trade-off

"You want to make good movies and hope they come gracefully but easy usually doesn't lend itself well to making interesting things."

Willem Dafoe

Eyes on the prize: Dafoe's character struggles to deal with the wilderness as he searches for the Tasmanian tiger. HANDOUT

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Lindsay Lohan being accused of assault ... again

Lindsay Lohan ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

A woman is accusing Lindsay Lohan of attacking her at a party in the Standard Hotel in West Hollywood recently, but Lohan's rep insists the troubled actress didn't even leave her home the night in question, according to TMZ.

And the website seems to be on Lohan's side, for once.

"We have spoken with six people at the hotel — some of whom were working on the night in question — and none of them saw Lindsay that evening," the site reports.

The woman in question claims she was assaulted by Lohan after chatting up a guy the actress had her eye on.

"Lindsay was absolutely not involved in any sort of altercation whatsoever. This is clearly another case of someone looking for money and 15 minutes of fame," Steve Honig, Lohan's rep, says.

"You have to wonder about someone who calls the media before the police."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Rinna making adult diapers cool

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Maybe you've seen Lisa Rinna star in a new Depend adult diapers commercial.

But in case you haven't, here's the recap: The 48-year-old is filmed wearing a skintight black dress on the red carpet, but, surprise, she's also wearing Depend's new Silhouette for Women line underneath that dress.

"I am wearing an evening gown, for God's sake!" she says in the commercial.

"And you can't tell I have it on. Check out the boo-tay!"

She then commands her poor husband Harry Hamlin to touch her tush to check it out for himself.

Surprising? Yes. Commercials for adult diapers are not the most, say, sexy of things to star in. But Rinna swears she's not talking about incontinence in order to keep herself in lip injections — she did it for charity and women's rights.

"They donated $225,000 to Dress for Success if I tried them on in the commercial," the actress told the Huffington Post, meaning she must have pocketed a little extra on top of that donation.

"That's why I did it. Plus, I loved their campaign."

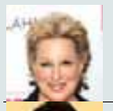
"I don't endorse many products." (Ed note: True! The last time she was a celebrity spokeswoman was for The Flex Belt Abdominal Toning Belt; do with that information what you will.)

"When I was first asked, I was surprised," she explains. "I'm not the first person you think of when you think of Depends. ... I believe women should feel good about themselves and if that means they need to talk about their problems, then absolutely. We need to help each other. I was not afraid to do this."

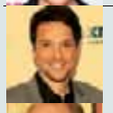
I believe that too, as should most women.

And it's not wearing an adult diaper that makes me roll my eyes — it's the fact that she used the word boo-tay to describe her butt.

Twitter

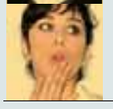


@BetteMidler
Jeez! I just bumped into a crowd a people all looking down at their devices!! Look up, people!!



@ralphmacchio
Taking in some broadway today. Vintage musical theatre on the menu.

@MJMcKean
Emmy show producers: please please PLEASE let J Lo announce the Downton Abbey nominations.



@SarahKSilverman
Worrying u don't get the respect u deserve is a great way to ensure you'll never get the respect u deserve

Miley Cyrus

Miley Cyrus blames weight loss on allergies

Miley Cyrus is striking back against critics who speculate she has an eating disorder.

"For everyone calling me anorexic, I have a gluten and lactose allergy. It's not about weight — it's about health," Cyrus posted on Twitter. "'She won't eat 2,000 calories worth of food in one sitting? She must have a problem.' I ate today at Easter lunch but all of it was healthy and even more fulfilling! Health is happiness!"

In fact, Cyrus thinks her food allergy has been a great thing — and is encouraging her fans to dump gluten.

"Everyone should try no gluten for a week! The change in your skin, physical and mental health is amazing! You won't go back," she posted.

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3 LIFE

Travel in brief

Tasmanian tourism banking on Dafoe flick

Tasmanian tourism officials are hoping for spinoffs from The Hunter, a thriller starring Willem Dafoe being released this month in North American cinemas. The film was shot entirely in the Australian island state. Some of the wild locales are highlighted online at Discover Tasmania (http://bit.ly/HakKOp), the state's official tourism website. The Hunter follows Dafoe as he pursues the last Tasmanian tiger through scenery that appears "prehistoric and forbidding," according to a New York Times review. The dog-sized beast has, in fact, been officially extinct for many years, but Discover Tasmania says there have continued to be "countless sightings, some by highly regarded scientists," and is inviting visitors to trek wilderness trails in search of a real-life specimen.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the Web

Bruce Willis says he's willing to give away Idaho ski area to a non-profit

Sunshine and snow — the perfect spring combination

Whistler. Pack your sunscreen and ski gear because the slopes are still open. There's plenty to do for non-skiers, too.

AURÉLIE RESCH
life@metronews.ca

Skiing or snowboarding in a T-shirt? An après-ski drink on the patio while you work on your tan? BBQ's at 6,000 feet? That's springtime in Whistler. Although the weather is warming, there are still lots of great activities and attractions — not to mention spring prices and rates — to take advantage of!

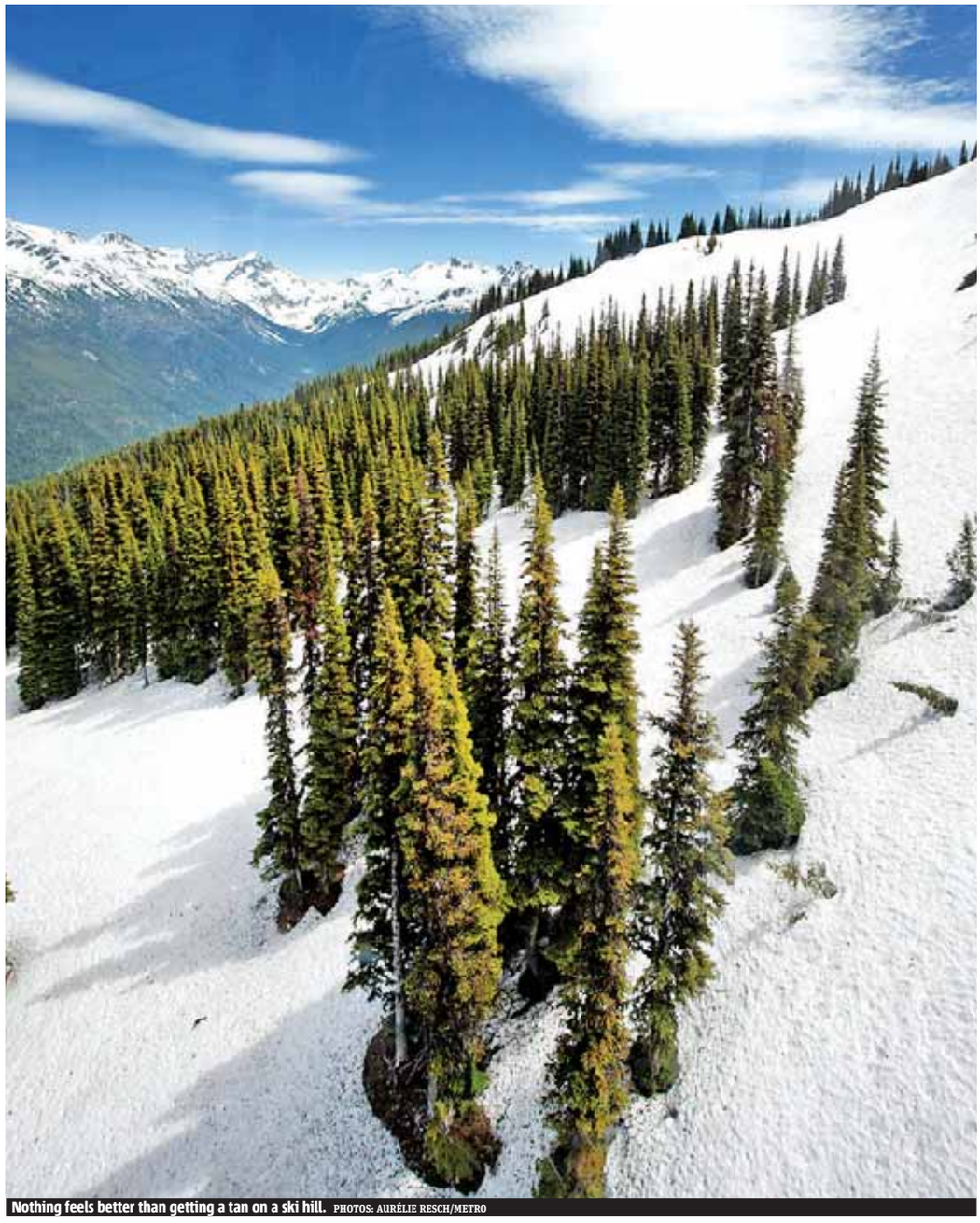
Spring skiing/snowboarding is the perfect mix of sunshine and snow. The snow is melting elsewhere but high up on the mountains, the conditions are still great for those who can't get enough of the slopes.

This year, the spring ski season extends through April on Whistler Mountain and through May on Blackcomb Mountain.

In June when mountain biking takes over Whistler, the hardcore skiers (or those who appreciate a little novelty) can continue to ski on Blackcomb Glacier.

For those looking for a less physically strenuous activity at Whistler, black bear watching is one option.

Whistler is home to up to 70 black bears who can be seen coming out of hibernation on the grassy slopes of the mountains during mid-to-late spring and throughout summer. Starting mid-May, visitors can take part in a black bear viewing tour from the safety of 4x4 vehicles, where experienced nature guides will lead you to popular bear viewing spots.



Nothing feels better than getting a tan on a ski hill. PHOTOS: AURÉLIE RESCH/METRO

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Van Gogh set to bloom in Ottawa exhibit this spring

National Gallery of Canada. A lot of legwork went into gathering pieces for exhibit — be sure to see them 'Up Close'

The most difficult part of mounting a major Vincent Van Gogh exhibition in Ottawa, says Anabelle Kienle, was persuading galleries around the globe to loan out their treasured pieces.

"It was a very tough thing because Van Gogh's paintings are beloved. And when people come to institutions those are the paintings they want to see," said Kienle, co-curator of Van Gogh: Up Close, opening next month at the National Gallery of Canada.

"It took us several appeals, often, for one painting. We really travelled the world to convince those lenders to part with these pictures."

Art lovers eager to learn more about the post-Impressionist master's compelling interpretations of the natural world will be glad to know Kienle and her colleagues succeeded in borrowing his paintings that usually hang in galleries everywhere from Amsterdam to Honolulu.

The exhibition of 45 carefully selected canvases will be the first sizable display of the Dutch artist's work in Canada in more than a quarter century.

It was co-organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art, where the exhibition is currently displayed.

The show, which appears in Ottawa from May 25 to Sept. 3, focuses on Van Gogh's detailed depiction of nature in the paintings he produced in France during the final three-and-a-half, often trying, years of his life.

Upon moving to Paris in 1886, Van Gogh drew on the hallmarks of Impressionism, incorporating vivid colour and bold brush work into his painting. He also began experimenting with perspective and presentation, creating still-life images and outdoor scenes without a traditional background, focusing instead on blossoms, sheaves and tree trunks.

The idea for the show sprang from a conversation six years ago between Kienle, the National Gallery's assistant curator of European and American art, and longtime associate Cornelia Homburg, an independent scholar in France and guest curator on the project.

Homburg noted the National Gallery had long held Van Gogh's well-known 1889 work Iris, painted soon after he admitted himself to an asylum with a walled garden in St-Remy-de-Provence. The iconic picture, a lively burst of green and blue, is emblematic of the close-up views of trees, flowers and fields that came to characterize his later style.

"I actually noticed that this is something that Van Gogh has done in his work, but nobody has ever addressed it in scholarship," said Kienle.

Iris and the 1886 work Bowl with Zinnias and Other Flowers are the National Gallery's contributions to the exhibition.

"It's always nice as a curator if you have paintings in your collection that you can use as a starting point," said Kienle.

"That's the ideal, so that you frame what the Canada collection already has in a new light — so that people also see a painting in a different context and appreciate it even more."

Van Gogh's oeuvre was largely unappreciated during his lifetime, and it is believed he shot himself at age 37. He left more than 2,000 artworks and a trove of revealing letters, including many to his dear brother Theo, an art dealer.

Today he is known not only as a primary influence on leading 20th-century painters, but as a complex artist whose work beguiles gallery-goers and commands staggering prices at auction.

"He's a daunting figure for any art historian because he's been studied in such depth, and he's so incredibly versatile and somebody who's very hard to grasp," said Kienle.

She hopes visitors come away from the exhibition with a fresh perspective on the artist as a "very deliberate thinker" on a quest to establish himself as a modern painter.

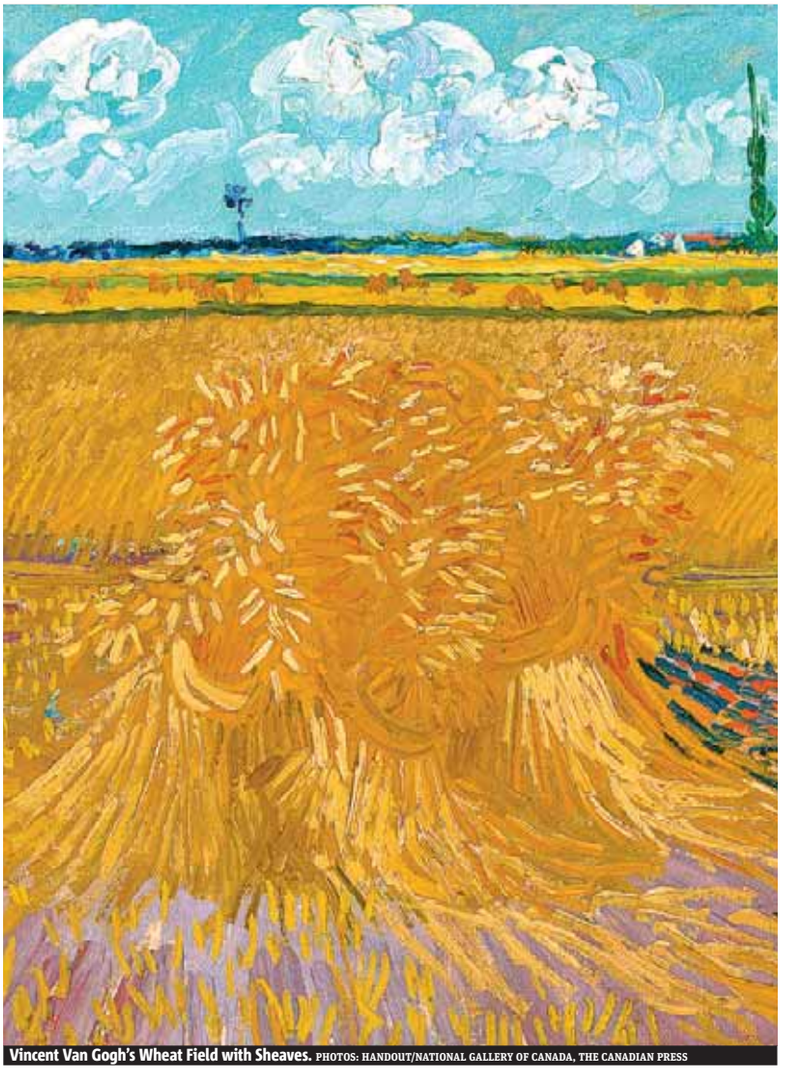
"Many people have a very visceral response to Van Gogh," she said.

"And the excitement that's already building is a testament to that."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

If you go...

- **Van Gogh: Up Close.** May 25 to Sept. 3, 2012. National Gallery of Canada, 380 Sussex Dr., Ottawa. Daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursdays to 8 p.m. Last ticket of the day issued 90 minutes before exhibition's closing.
- **Buy tickets online.** At gallery.ca/vangogh/en/32.htm



Vincent Van Gogh's Wheat Field with Sheaves. PHOTOS: HANDOUT/NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA, THE CANADIAN PRESS

Van Gogh's Tree Trunks in the Grass.

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Anna Olson makes sweet endings a little bit sweeter

Anna Olson films her new series out of her own kitchen in the Niagara, Ont. area. She often donates extra treats to local shelters and hospices. HANDOUT

DELIA MACPHERSON
For Metro Canada

Anna Olson sums up how she stays in such great shape (despite all the sweets) in one word: balance.

"I love my breakfasts," she says. "I eat oatmeal. It keeps me from snacking on the wrong things throughout the day."

Like decadent cookies and moist cakes? "It's not good to deny yourself a treat, just like it's not good to over indulge," adds the celebrity chef, whose new show, Bake with Anna Olson, starts airing Thursday on the Food Network Canada.

The show features baking tips that have taken Olson years to figure out, like using a whisk to fold egg whites into batter rather than a spatula, or double-checking your measuring spoons and cups for accuracy. "You'd be surprised on how many are wrong," she says.

Olson recommends that if you're going to eat sweets, bake them yourself, because homemade baked goods taste better than store-bought and don't have overly processed ingredients. "Baking at home means you control the ingredients, so you know exactly what's going in," she says. "When you're baking, you bake to share."

Making homemade, she adds, can also allow you to control the portions. For example, make cookies twice as small so you only eat half a portion.

Bake with Anna Olson also airs on Saturdays.

Top 5 Pie Crust Tips

1. Relax and don't listen to your inner negativity.
2. Don't add too much water and don't let it get too warm.
3. Follow the recipe. If it calls for ice-cold butter, it probably needs ice-cold water too.
4. You don't need fancy tools. Pie pastry can be brought together with two knives.
5. Practice makes perfect.

Pie Dough. This crust is ideal with wet fillings like coconut cream

This recipe is designed for pies that have a wet filling, such as pumpkin, coconut cream and butter tarts. Make a half recipe if you just need a single crust.

1. Combine flour, sugar and salt in a bowl. Cut in butter by hand with pastry cutter until only small pieces of butter are visible and mix begins to take on pale yellow colour.

2. Stir water and lemon juice together. Add to dough, mixing until the dough just comes together. Shape dough into two discs, wrap and chill for at least two hours before rolling. Alternatively, dough can be frozen for up to three months and thawed in the fridge before rolling.

COURTESY OF FOOD NETWORK CANADA (FROM EPISODE 2 OF BAKE WITH ANNA OLSON, AIRING APRIL 12)

Ingredients

- 2 ¼ cups cake & pastry flour
- 2 tbsp sugar
- ¾ tsp salt
- 1 cup cold unsalted butter, cut into pieces
- 6 tbsp cold water
- 1 tbsp lemon juice

Drink of the Week

Ginger Rogers

Ginger is known as one of nature's aphrodisiacs.

Inspired by the classic American actress, Ginger Rogers is a blend of Campari, strawberry, clementine, orange juice, 7UP and the secret ingredient: a pinch of ginger powder!

Wake up your senses up with this delectably fruity drink.

1. Muddle fresh clementine and sliced strawberry. Add ice and pour Campari, orange juice, and a splash of 7UP into cocktail shaker. Sprinkle pinch of ginger powder on top of ingredients. Shake well and strain onto rocks in highball glass. Garnish with pansy, serve.

- 2 oz Campari
- 1 whole strawberry
- 5 pieces of clementine
- 3 oz orange juice
- Ginger powder
- Splash of 7Up

RECIPE AND PHOTO: SKYY SPIRITS

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Downward dog at your desk? Say yes to yoga

Namaste needed. looking for some relief at your nine-to-five? Give your body and soul a little breather

JULIA WEST
Metro World News in Philadelphia

Is your stress ball worn through?

If tension at work is leading to tension in your muscles, it can affect your mood and performance. For quick relief and a little desk-side Zen, take some cues from yoga.

Breathe

Angie Norris, co-founder of Philadelphia yoga hot spot Studio 34, reminds us to breathe — and breathe slowly.

"Slowing and deepening the breath stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, slows the heart rate, lowers blood pressure and increases the flow of oxygen," she explains. "This translates into reduced stress, increased relaxation and increased energy."

Stretch

To ease tension, stress and negative mid-afternoon thoughts, stretch it out. Nancy Byrd Radding, fitness director of The Oaks at Ojai spa in California, recommends this sequence: "Stand up. Breathe. Lift your arms up in Tall Mountain pose.

Do a side stretch next — one hand on the hip, the other arm over the head — creating a crescent shape with the body.

Stretch the eyes by looking slowly side to side, up and down, diagonally, and roll the eyes in circles. Stretch the neck by releasing each ear to its shoulder, then turn the neck side to side, up and down."

Twist

Taylor Wells, president of Prana Power Yoga, praises the benefits of a simple, yet effective, spinal twist. You don't even need to get out of your seat for this one.

"From seated, bring both feet flat on the floor," she instructs.

"Place your hands on your arm rests and gently twist your torso to the right. Hold for five breaths and then take it back to center and to the other side."

Balancing act

Have you been feeling a little wobbly at work?

- To restore balance, Radding suggests this move:

"Stand on one foot whenever possible – during phone calls, in front of the copier. Simply tuck one foot around the opposite ankle and balance."

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4

SPORTS

Quoted

"Patrick is impulsive and a guy who says what he thinks. When you win, the media are OK, but when you lose, you become a target. And Patrick, as coach, would be more of a media target because of his temperament."

Montreal Canadiens legend Guy Lafleur isn't among those who believe former all-star goaltender Patrick Roy should be the team's next coach. The Canadiens recently fired GM Pierre Gauthier as the team limped toward the end of a disastrous season. And they will also probably be looking for a new coach this spring to replace Randy Cunneyworth, whose coaching title carries the "interim" tag.

On the web

Canada hammered Russia at the women's world hockey championship on Tuesday, but Canadian captain Hayley Wickenheiser wasn't satisfied — particularly with the Russian hockey federation. Scan the code for the story.

Lions give QB Lulay contract extension

Two-year deal. Grey Cup champs lock up last piece of potent offensive arsenal

Travis Lulay rushes upfield as he eludes the tackle of Odell Willis of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers during the 2011 Grey Cup at BC Place. JEFF VINNICK/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Travis Lulay has put his NFL aspirations on hold for at least one more year.

The B.C. Lions rewarded Lulay, their No. 1 quarterback, on Tuesday for his outstanding 2011 CFL season by signing him to a new two-year contract. Lulay confirmed the deal includes one year plus an option.

"Even when I first came to this league, I never wanted to come here and think that I'd go somewhere else," said Lulay. "So I consider myself all-in here. That's really what this is about."

Lulay, a 28-year-old Salem, Ore., native, was due to play out his option in 2012 and then could have become a free agent.

"It's securing next season and the near future," he said. "But if the NFL was really what I wanted to do, I would have just played out (the 2012) season and tried to see what would happen."

Lulay guided the Lions last year to an 11-7 record, a first-place finish in the West Division and a remarkable Grey Cup last November. The miraculous championship came after the Lions started the season 1-6.

He was named the CFL's outstanding player as well as the 2011 Grey Cup MVP.

With Lulay's signing, the Lions now have all of their offensive starters under contract for 2012.

Noting that most of the returners were also with the club last season when it lost its first five games, Lulay said he likes the Lions' chances of repeating as Grey Cup champions.

"To have all of your starters return after a championship season, that doesn't happen very often," said Lulay. "It's exciting."

Before signing with the Lions as a free agent in 2009, the Montana State grad had three unsuccessful tryouts with the Seattle Seahawks, another one with the New Orleans Saints and also played in the now-defunct NFL Europe with the Berlin Thunder.

In Lions general manager Wally Buono's view, Lulay took the team's interests into account by signing a new deal rather than by playing out his option.

"For a high-profile player, I really don't like the option year," said Buono.

Ideally, said Buono, the club would like to have five quarterbacks at training camp, which begins at the end of May in Kamloops, and keep four.

The Lions held two free-agent camps in Las Vegas and Los Angeles in March, and Buono hopes to sign one or two quarterbacks who attended.

But he does not plan to draft a Canadian university passer, because that would require making him a high selection. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"It will be a different atmosphere, a different feel among the quarterbacks, because all of a sudden I'm the oldest guy in the room."

Travis Lulay, who is now B.C's most experienced quarterback following veteran Jarious Jackson's release and subsequent signing as a free agent with the Toronto Argonauts.

The Lions' king

With the departure of Jarious Jackson to Toronto, Lulay is now B.C.'s most experience pivot

- The mobile Lulay ranked second among quarterbacks in rushing with 391 yards on 47 attempts including 14 gains of 10 yards or more.
- B.C. now has three pivots under contract with Mike Reilly occupying second string and Corey Leonard. General manager Wally Buono hopes to sign two more pivots before the season begins.

NHL

Oilers strike it rich again in NHL draft lottery

Already armed with a pool of young players that any NHL team would love to have, Steve Tambellini arrived at Tuesday night's draft lottery not even thinking about winning it. And then the Edmonton Oilers beat the odds and earned the No. 1 pick for a third straight year.

"I guess if you're in the lottery and you come here, you might as well win it," said Tambellini, the Oilers general manager, whose team had just an 18.8 per cent chance to do it. "I feel really excited about the fact that now another young talent hopefully at the level of what the past few picks have been (is coming).

The Columbus Blue Jackets will pick second, followed by the Montreal Canadiens, New York Islanders and Toronto Maple Leafs.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Men's hockey

Nugent-Hopkins joins Canada; Stamkos out

Ryan Nugent-Hopkins is set to extend a memorable season by joining Canada for the IIHF World Hockey Championship.

The Edmonton Oilers rookie accepted an invitation Tuesday after receiving medical clearance from the Oilers. Nugent-Hopkins missed time this season with a shoulder injury, but was eager for the opportunity to represent his country.

The NHL's top goal-scorer, Steven Stamkos, has elected to rest his shoulder and will not travel to Europe.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Canucks (1) vs. Kings (8)

Season series: Vancouver went 2-1-1.

Lowdown: Regular-season champs for a second straight year, Vancouver is looking to get one more win this spring than last. Arguably the only reason L.A. got into the playoffs is goalie Jonathan Quick, who registered 10 shutouts.

Pick: Canucks in seven.

Blues (2) vs. Sharks (7)

Season series: St. Louis went 4-0-0.

Lowdown: The jockeying started early with Sharks coach Todd McLellan pronouncing his team the underdog and noting the pressure St. Louis is under. While that's true based on the regular season, San Jose holds an undisputed edge in playoff experience after advancing to the Western Conference final the last two years.

Pick: St. Louis in five.

Coyotes (3) vs. Blackhawks (6)

Season series: Phoenix went 3-1-0.

Lowdown: The Coyotes are trying to win their first playoff series. They have drawn Chicago, with a captain (Jonathan Toews) who has concussion problems and a goalie (Corey Crawford) who is struggling.

Pick: Hawks in five.

Predators (4) vs. Wings (5)

Season series: Tied 3-3-0.

Lowdown: This series pits the up-and-comers (Nashville) against the wily veterans (Detroit). Preds GM David Poile believes he's built a cup contender. But Detroit has lost just once in the first-round since the lockout and have welcomed back a number of injured players.

Pick: Preds in seven.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canucks quiet on Sedin's status ahead of playoffs

The Canucks are facing a scenario where they might have to start the playoffs without their leading goal scorer, Daniel Sedin. DALE MACMILLAN/GETTY IMAGES

Canucks. Daniel skates after practice, but still no word whether he'll be ready for Game 1

The Vancouver Canucks kick off the NHL playoffs Wednesday night against the Los Angeles Kings, but whether Daniel Sedin will be on the ice remains a mystery.

The Canucks star was a no-show at the team's practice but skated with a few other teammates afterward. He had been scheduled to speak to reporters, a session the club even promoted on its website beforehand. But he was not made available.

"It's a unique injury, and he will continue the protocol," said coach Alain Vigneault. "When he's ready to play, he'll address you. Until that time, he won't talk to you."

Hopes were raised Monday when Sedin, out with a concussion since March 21, practised with the team for the first time since he was injured. While he didn't speak to the media, his teammate and twin brother, Henrik, said he was "100 per cent." Daniel Sedin was expected to take part in his second team workout Tuesday.

Vigneault refused to say what part of the concussion-recovery protocol allows for Sedin to practise one day with the main group and then be forced to do a lighter workout with fewer players.

Vigneault also declined to say whether Sedin would play in Game 1.

"You should know by now that I don't discuss lineup decisions," he said.

The coach said he divided the group into two because he wanted to limit the main practice to four lines after he had to deal with five lines and nine defencemen Monday.

Sedin was sidelined after taking an elbow in the head from Chicago Blackhawks defenceman Duncan Keith, who was suspended for five games.

Henrik Sedin, the Canucks captain, declined to say whether his brother had suffered a setback after Monday's practice.

Daniel Sedin led the Canucks in goals during the regular season with 30 and compiled a total of 67 points. He missed nine games, eight of which the Canucks won.

Henrik Sedin said the Canucks have been able to win without Daniel and will have to do so again, if necessary.

This is the second time the Canucks and Kings have met in the playoffs in the past three years. Vancouver eliminated L.A. in the first round of the 2009-10 postseason. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"We've got to play as a team. It's not going to change if he's there or not. We've got to roll four lines."

Canucks captain Henrik Sedin on the possibility of starting the playoffs without his brother Daniel

L.A.

Kings focus on positives after rough end to season

For a few days late in their tumultuous season, the Los Angeles Kings were on the verge of a breakthrough. They were in position to win just the second division title in franchise history, and they could have hosted a playoff series for the first time in about two decades.

With two extra-time losses to San Jose in the final three days of the regular season, the Kings slipped all the way from third place to eighth in the Western Conference, stumbling into a first-round matchup with the Vancouver Canucks.

No wonder coach Darryl Sutter chose to emphasize the Kings' positive achievements this week before they headed to B.C. to face the mighty Canucks.

"The biggest challenge was just to get into the playoffs," said Sutter, who replaced Terry Murray in December. "To do, with 21 games left, what we had to do to get in, the players did an awesome job. That's why you do this. That's what it's about. (The Canucks) are the best team in the league, and we have to have some guys play above and beyond what they played in the regular season."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canucks must cut to the Quick

THE HOCKEY NEWS
Edward Fraser
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Several questions are queued up for the Canucks as they get set to face the Los Angeles Kings in Round 1, but none is more pressing than this: How do we beat legitimate Norris and Hart Trophy candidate Jonathan Quick?

The 26-year-old goaltender has been nothing short of remarkable, posting the league's top goals-against average (1.95) and third-best save percentage (.929) among starters. The low-scoring Kings' hopes rest solely on his shoulders.

The first and foremost — and most obvious — answer to producing against L.A. is to get the power play back on track. Vancouver finished the regular season fourth overall with the man advantage at 19.8 per cent, but that's misleading in the sense the team has clipped along at 13.3 per cent since early January. A unit that once threw the puck around with crisp confidence has been out of sorts for months and tried everything short of putting Roberto Luongo on the point in an effort to find the answer.

Getting back Daniel Sedin — along with his team-leading 10 power-play goals — will reunite the No. 1 quintet of the Bros., Ryan Kesler, Sami Salo and Alex Edler and will certainly help matters, as will the confidence boost from scoring a pair of PP markers in the regular-season closer against Edmonton. Success will come from simplicity: Shots from the point with traffic down low or jam plays from in tight and banging in rebounds.

And if the numbers hold true from the regular season, Vancouver will get plenty of opportunities to strike. Only five teams were shorthanded more often than the Kings, but, unfortunately for Canucks fans, the Kings had the league's fourth-best penalty kill at 87 per cent. (On the flip side, the Canucks PK was sixth at 86 per cent and the Kings power play 16th at 17 per cent.)

Much of the same philosophy should apply to 5-on-5 as it does for the power play. Quick lives up to his surname going laterally and he doesn't get beat often if he can see a shot. Traffic, traffic, traffic and plenty of shots should be the edict.

The team that's most willing to go to the dirty areas in this series will ultimately determine the victor. My prediction: Canucks in six.

Rangers (1) vs. Senators (8)

Season series: Ottawa went 3-1-0.

Lowdown: The Senators exceeded expectations and believe they're in position to pull off an upset. The Sens had success against a Rangers team that was the class of the East. New York, led by goalie Henrik Lundqvist, boasts a less potent attack than the Sens.

Pick: Rangers in six.

Bruins (2) vs. Capitals (7)

Season series: Washington went 3-1-0.

Lowdown: The Bruins begin their quest for another cup against a Capitals team that could be dangerous with Nicklas Backstrom and Mike Green returning from injuries. Key players Tim Thomas, Zdeno Chara, Patrice Bergeron and the emerging Tyler Seguin remain in Boston.

Pick: Bruins in six.

Panthers (3) vs. Devils (6)

Season series: Florida went 2-1-1.

Lowdown: The Panthers finished with fewer points but got the higher seed by winning their division. The Devils' Ilya Kovalchuk is the series' best player but has played in just nine playoff games.

Pick: Devils in five.

Penguins (4) vs. Flyers (5)

Season series: Philadelphia went 4-2-0.

Lowdown: It's being billed as the series to watch. The storylines are endless — from Sidney Crosby's playoff return to Jaromir Jagr and Max Talbot returning to Pittsburgh as Flyers, to questions surrounding Philly goalie Ilya Bryzgalov. The only guarantee is one contender will be eliminated.

Pick: Pens in seven.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Let the Flyers-Pens 'bloodbath' begin

NHL. Crosby, Malkin downplay Flyers' trash talk ahead of Game 1

Sidney Crosby and Evgeni Malkin spent last spring watching their Pittsburgh Penguins teammates try to carry on without them, a burden that became too much during a seven-game loss to upstart Tampa Bay in the opening round.

A year later, the helpless feeling of trudging around in a suit while the franchise they expected to carry to a Stanley Cup floundered on the ice below them remains fresh.

The memory of the long ride down the elevator from the press box to the quiet dressing room following a listless 1-0 defeat in Game 7 is why Crosby never considered shutting it down this season despite a 15-month battle with concussion-like symptoms while Malkin became arguably the best player in the world while playing on a completely rebuilt knee.

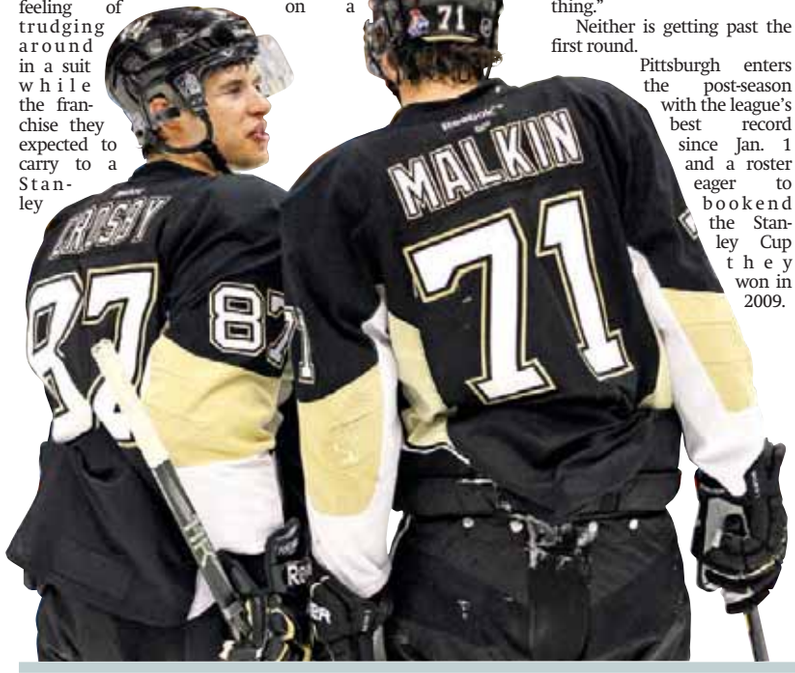
It's also why neither player is eager to engage in a war of words with rival Philadelphia in the run-up to Pittsburgh's first-round meeting with the Flyers starting Wednesday.

The opponent is almost immaterial to two players used to writing "playoffs" on their calendar every season in ink, not pencil.

"I think, if anything, you just appreciate being in the playoffs even more," Crosby said. "It's not an automatic thing."

Neither is getting past the first round.

Pittsburgh enters the post-season with the league's best record since Jan. 1 and a roster eager to bookend the Stanley Cup they won in 2009.



Quoted

"You know, I'm not afraid of anything. I'm afraid of bears — bears in the forest."

Flyers goalie Ilya Bryzgalov on the series vs. the Penguins.

Meanwhile, Philadelphia traded veterans Jeff Carter and Mike Richards following a second-round loss to Boston last year, yet barely missed a beat.

The players change but the mindset in Philadelphia does not. The Flyers are still aggressive, both on the ice and in front of a microphone.

Coach Peter Laviolette didn't hesitate to call Pittsburgh's Dan Bylsma "gutless" for sending out a checking line in the late stages of a 6-4 Philadelphia win on April 1, a move that led to a brawl following Joe Vitale's punishing — if clean — hit on Philadelphia's Danny Briere.

Perhaps, but the Flyers have a way of getting underneath the skin of an opponent. Forward Scott Hartnell embraces the villain role better than any player in the league.

He talked openly about wanting to punch Malkin, Crosby and defenceman Kris Letang in the face if given the opportunity and has predicted the series will turn into a "bloodbath." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Blues

Elliott leaves ice during practice

St. Louis Blues goaltender Brian Elliott left practice midway through a 90-minute practice Tuesday with what coach Ken Hitchcock is calling an upper-body injury and is listed as day-to-day.

The team recalled goalie Jake Allen from Peoria of the American Hockey League. The Blues open the playoffs at home Thursday against San Jose.

Hitchcock said he expects Elliott to be fine and has not made a decision on whether to start Elliott or Jaroslav Halak in Game 1. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Capitals

Holtby expected to start Game 1

Washington Capitals goaltender Michal Neuvirth is uncertain whether he'll be able to play in the first-round playoff series against the Boston Bruins.

Neuvirth practised Tuesday for the first time since injuring his left leg last week, but wasn't able to stay on the ice. Asked if he thinks he'll play against Boston, he said: "I don't have the answer."

Tomas Vokoun is more pessimistic. He skated briefly before practice on his injured groin and said: "I'm disappointed as anyone that it turned out this way, but I try and I just can't do it. It's a groin, and for a goalie that's essential."

The injuries mean third-choice Braden Holtby is expected to make his playoff debut in Game 1 on Thursday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

There are reasons for optimism in Ottawa

THE HOCKEY NEWS
Murray Pam
vancouver@metronews.ca

The Ottawa Senators enter the playoffs with a label similar to the one they carried into the 2011-12 regular season: Decided underdogs. Six months ago, nobody expected the Sens to challenge for a post-season berth and now very few believe, as the No. 8 seed, they can topple the New York Rangers. But, as they've proven before, improbable is not impossible. Here are some reasons for optimism:

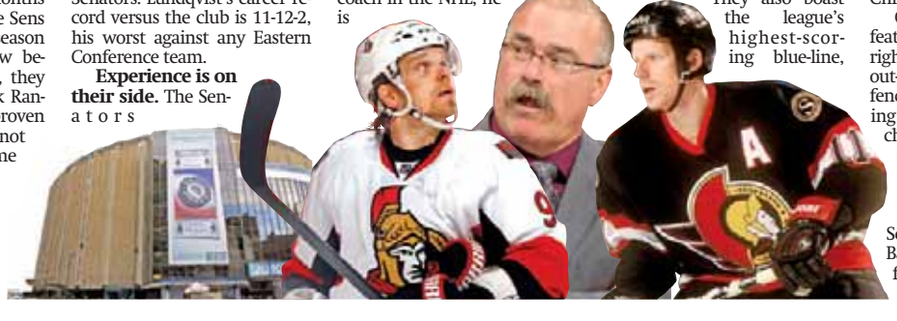
They love N.Y. Since the lockout, the Sens are 11-2-1 at Madison Square Garden, including two wins in two tries this season. In fact, the Senators may petition to play the entire series on the road as the Rangers are 8-6 over the same period at Scotiabank Place.

Not bowing to King Henrik. Beating Rangers Vezina Trophy candidate Henrik Lundqvist may be intimidating to some. But the 30-year-old has shown cracks when playing the Senators. Lundqvist's career record versus the club is 11-12-2, his worst against any Eastern Conference team.

Experience is on their side. The Senators playoff roster holds a 514-419 advantage over the Rangers in post-season games played. Also, six current Sens were key components in last season's AHL Calder Cup win. That has to count for something.

The power of the 'stache. While this is Paul MacLean's first campaign as a head coach in the NHL, he is no stranger to playoff wars. As an assistant in Anaheim and Detroit, MacLean won a cup and was a finalist twice in seven appearances. He also played 53 playoff games.

Goal scoring. The Senators rank fourth league-wide in goals, led by Milan Michalek's 35 and Jason Spezza's 34. They also boast the league's highest-scoring blue-line, which features Erik Karlsson's 78 points. While the Rangers' Marion Gaborik tallied 41, the club was 11th in scoring, a low ranking for a No. 1 seed.



Repeat history. In 1998 as a No. 8 seed in Round 1, the Senators defeated the Devils. That club featured a 25-year-old Daniel Alfredsson and rookie Chris Phillips.

Granted, for Ottawa to defeat New York a lot must go right. Craig Anderson has to out-duel Lundqvist. The defence has to be adept at avoiding the Rangers' daunting forecheck and, most of all, the NHL's second-most penalized team has to find a way to stay out of the box.

If those things occur, the Sens have a fighting chance. Based on their resilience so far this season, are you prepared to count them out?

The lighter side of luxury

ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASE

Backing up

Infiniti has made most of its advanced electronic safety and crash-avoiding accessories available for the JX, plus a couple of first-time features. Leading this group is Backup Collision Intervention (BCI) that, when the JX is reversing, can detect vehicles in close proximity or crossing diagonally behind and apply the brakes.

The power lift gate gives you access to the largest cargo hold in its class.

All-wheel-drive

For the Canadian market, the JX comes standard with an on-demand all-wheel-drive system that directs 100 per cent of the engine's torque to the front under normal driving conditions, but can split off half to the rear wheels to maximize grip under slippery conditions.

2013 Infiniti JX

- **Type.** Four-door, all-wheel-drive luxury wagon.
- **Engine (hp):** 3.5-litre DOHC V6 (265).
- **Mileage:** L/100 km (city/hwy) 11.5/8.5.
- **Base Price (incl. destination):** $46,900.

Engine

The heart of the JX is the same familiar 3.5-litre V6 that can be found on a number of Nissan/Infiniti products. For the JX application, it produces 265 horsepower and 248 pound-feet of torque. That's not a lot of thrust for this category, especially when non-luxury seven-passenger brands like the Mazda CX-9 pack more power.

Review. Sitting pretty with seven-passenger utility and a smaller footprint

MALCOLM GUNN
Wheelbase Media

It's said that portion control is an essential part of any successful weight-loss program. That appears to be what Infiniti is practising with its scaled-down seven-passenger JX35 wagon.

Nissan's premium division currently markets the eight-passenger QX56 that uses Nissan's Titan truck chassis and 400-horsepower V8. But it demands a $75,000 entry fee and possesses a significant appetite for fuel that requires increasingly deeper pockets to satisfy.

It also checks in at a chunky 2,545 kilograms, which makes it a less-than-lithe dance partner on the highway or when negotiating a parking spot.

By contrast, the spanking new JX35 carries up to seven people across three rows of seats, but due to its passenger-car construction and smaller engine, it weighs about 365 kilograms less than the QX.

It also touts a base price that's about $30,000 shy of its bigger sibling.

The JX gives Infiniti buyers another option in a category that includes the Acura MDX, Buick Enclave, Volvo XC90 and Lincoln MKT.

They now represent the luxury-class sweet spot as more buyers defect from the traditional sport utility vehicles to more size and fuel-efficient models.

At $46,900 including destination charges, the JX35 makes a strong case for consideration in the luxury wagon bracket, where being in shape and packing the right gear gets you noticed every time.

5 DRIVE

Top Gear

EFI swap made easy

The mere mention of switching to fuel injection from carburetion is likely enough to send many old-school car guys into convulsions, but the benefits are so overwhelming — better fuel economy, mid-range power, easy starting, less evaporative emissions, and, oh yes, it's not a carburetor — that a change is hard to ignore. And with systems coming on stream that are easy to install and set up, there's really no time like the present. MSD's new Atomic throttle-body fuel-injection system needs just eight wired connections and a single fuel line (just like a carburetor) with no computer programming necessary. It uses your current four-barrel intake manifold and linkage, and you can even use your current air cleaner assembly. There's a fantastic installation/setup video that should take any fear out of the conversion at atomicefi.com.

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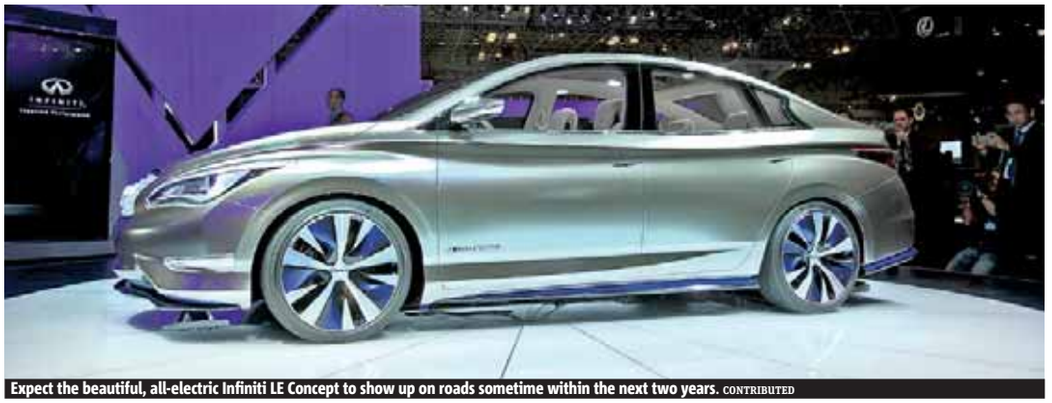

Expect the beautiful, all-electric Infiniti LE Concept to show up on roads sometime within the next two years. CONTRIBUTED

Electric luxury coming down the wire

Autopilot

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
drive@metronews.ca

New York is one city that likes its electricity, especially in and around Times Square. It's also a city that prides itself as a purveyor of various luxury items, like $100 lunches and $35 per hour parking spots.

So this week's New York International Auto Show isn't a bad venue at all, for the world debut of the Infiniti LE Concept. When it shows up in production form, sometime within the next two years, the Infiniti LE will be the first full-electric vehicle from a major luxury brand.

With a few notable exceptions, production electric cars have so far been smaller, "hatchback" designs, which also wear their electric-ness on their sleeves. That's what makes this Infiniti concept, purported to be about 80 per cent true to its production-ready form, such an interesting development. Early adopters and green enthusiasts might be willing to take a few hits for the team, but will the luxury consumer?

If it doesn't cut it as a luxury car, it won't matter whether it's powered by electricity, petroleum, or linoleum.

Infiniti is confident it can make electricity work for that luxury buyer. Big range and big speeds require big batteries, which in turn are heavy and need long charging times.

Heavy is not good for handling and performance. Long charging times are not good for A-type personalities with places to go and people to see. Infiniti says the LE will crack this conundrum with lightweight structures (aluminum panels), super aerodynamics (coefficient of drag of 0.25), high-tech batteries (Lithium-ion), and two charging systems (plug in and wireless).

If all goes according to plan, the LE will be the first production vehicle with a built-in wireless charging system. Wireless charging via "inductive" energy flow has been around for decades. A lot of people have inductive stoves. One energy coil is connected to an energy source. It creates a magnetic field that excites electrical current in a second coil. In the LE's case, a coil is located at the rear of the car, and the other coil, the one connected to a power source, could be safely encased on the garage floor.

But inductive systems are usually only 80 per cent as efficient in transferring electricity as the normal, with-a-plug way.

"Less efficiency, yes, but tons of convenience," counters Andy Palmer, a Nissan vice-president with a lot on his plate, including global operations of Infiniti.

He's got a point. Just roll into your garage, and if you've bookmarked the parking place in the GPS, the Infiniti is ready to "self park" precisely over the charging spot, with a feature called Intelligent Park Assist. But Palmer is most proud of the concept's sleek bodylines. He noted it was extremely difficult to achieve those precise, sharp lines in the aluminum body panels. Three times they started again, to make sure this all-electric car was all Infiniti and all luxury.

Of all the automakers, Nissan-Renault has placed the biggest bet on electric vehicles.

The partners have gone on record saying they intend to sell 1.5 million electric vehicles by 2016.

2016 is the year when automakers have to achieve very low emission standards, so low that many wonder how automakers can meet them with the current technology. Nissan-Renault has decided they'll do it by having a lot of zero-emission electric cars in the mix.

If they keep at least some of them as good looking as the LE Concept, it certainly wouldn't hinder that strategy's success.

**MSRP is $27,580 including freight and PDI of $1,590 based on a new 2012 CR-V LX 2WD model RM3H3CE(S). For all offers license, insurance, applicable taxes and registration are extra. Dealer may sell for less. Dealer trade may be required. †Limited time finance offer based on a new 2012 CR-V Touring model RM4H9CKN(S) and a 36 month finance term available only through Honda Canada Finance Inc. O.A.C. Finance example: $36,580 at 1.99%, per annum equals $498 for 36 months. Freight and PDI of $1,590 included. Cost of borrowing is $5,085.05, for a total obligation of $41,665.05. Down payment of $23,737.05, first monthly payment, environmental fees and $0 security deposit due at finance inception. Dealer may sell for less. Dealer trade may be required. †1.99% lease APR for 24 months O.A.C. Monthly payment, including freight and PDI, is $498. Down payment of $3,136.01, first monthly payment, environmental fees and $0 security deposit due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $15,088.01. Taxes, license, insurance and registration are extra. 96,000 kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. Dealer may sell for less. Dealer trade may be required. ††/†††Offers valid from March 1st through March 31st, 2012 at participating Honda retailers. Offers valid only for British Columbia residents at BC Honda Dealers locations. Offers subject to change or cancellation without notice. Terms and conditions apply. Visit www.bchonda.com or see your Honda retailer for full details.

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More Power. Less Fuel. Great Value is a comparison between the 2012 and the 2011 Chrysler Canada product lineups. 40 MPG or greater claim is based on 2012 EnerGuide highway fuel consumption estimates. Government of Canada test methods used. Your actual fuel consumption will vary based on driving habits and other factors. See your dealer for additional EnerGuide details. Wise customers read the fine print: •, ‡, ▪, ^, §. The Canada's Fastest Growing Automaker Event offers are limited time offers which apply to retail deliveries of selected new and unused models purchased from participating dealers on or after April 3, 2012. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Offers subject to change and may be extended without notice. See participating dealers for complete details and conditions. •$19,998 Purchase Price applies to 2012 Dodge Grand Caravan Canada Value Package (29E +GJ) only and includes $8,000 Consumer Cash Discount. Pricing includes freight ($1,400–$1,500) and excludes licence, insurance, registration, any dealer administration fees and other applicable taxes. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Dealer may sell for less. See participating dealers for complete details. *Consumer Cash Discounts are offered on select new 2012 vehicles and are manufacturer-to-dealer incentives, which are deducted from the negotiated price before taxes. Amounts vary by vehicle. See your dealer for complete details. ‡4.99% purchase financing for up to 96 months available on the new 2012 Dodge Grand Caravan Ultimate Family Package models to qualified customers on approved credit through Royal Bank of Canada, Scotiabank, TD Auto Finance and Ally Credit Canada. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Dealer may sell for less. See your dealer for complete details. Example: 2012 Dodge Grand Caravan Ultimate Family Package with a Purchase Price of $26,998 (including applicable Consumer Cash and Ultimate Family Bonus Cash Discounts) financed at 4.99% over 96 months with $0 down payment equals 208 bi-weekly payments of $158 with a cost of borrowing of $5,772 and a total obligation of $32,770. Pricing includes freight ($1,400–$1,500) and excludes licence, insurance, registration, any dealer administration fees and other applicable taxes. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Dealer may sell for less. ▪Based on 2012 EnerGuide Fuel Consumption Ratings. Transport Canada test methods used. Your actual fuel economy will vary based on driving habits and other factors. 2012 Dodge Grand Caravan Canada Value Package – Hwy: 7.9 L/100 KM and City: 12.2 L/100 KM. The Best Buy Seal is a registered trademark of Consumers Digest Communications LLC, used under licence. ^SIRIUS and the dog logo are registered trademarks of SIRIUS Satellite Radio Inc. °Jeep is a registered trademark of Chrysler Group LLC. To retail customers on purchase/lease at participating dealers of a new 2012 Dodge Grand Caravan model (excluding Canada Value Package models) or any new 2012 Chrysler Town & Country model. The Bonus Cash amount ($1,250 for models equipped with a DVD player; $750 for all other models) will be deducted from the negotiated price after taxes. An additional $750 will be subtracted from the invoice price at time of purchase/lease. Some conditions apply. See your dealer for complete details. §2012 Dodge Grand Caravan Crew shown. Price including applicable Consumer Cash Discount: $27,395. Pricing includes freight ($1,400–$1,500) and excludes licence, insurance, registration, any dealer administration fees and other applicable taxes. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Dealer may sell for less. ^Based on Year-To-Date this year versus last year (Oct YTD 2011 versus Oct YTD 2010) R. L. Polk Canada, Inc. Canadian National Total NVR Market Share and volume gains data by brand. ^Based on overall cargo and passenger carry capacity, features, and seating and cargo configurations. ■Based on Ward's 2012 Small Van Segmentation. Excludes other Chrysler Group LLC designed and/or manufactured vehicles. ▫Based on 2012 EnerGuide Fuel Consumption Ratings. Transport Canada test methods used. Your actual fuel economy will vary based on driving habits and other factors. 2012 Dodge Grand Caravan Canada Value Package – Hwy: 7.9 L/100 KM and City: 12.2 L/100 KM. The Best Buy Seal is a registered trademark of Consumers Digest Communications LLC, used under licence. ^SIRIUS and the dog logo are registered trademarks of SIRIUS Satellite Radio Inc. °Jeep is a registered trademark of Chrysler Group LLC.

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Chevy Silverado 'tows like a dream'

Second Gear.
Ten years of trailblazing for the sturdy pickup

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
Drive@metronews.ca

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The 1997 to 2007 generation of Chevrolet's Silverado pickup truck offered numerous engine and driveline combinations, including six and eight cylinder power, automatic and manual transmissions and two or four-wheel drive.

Numerous body and box combinations were also available. When shopping used, LS and LT models were even more highly-equipped, though more basic "work" trucks could also be had.

Common Issues

As a bare minimum, a Chevrolet-trained mechanic should check the underside of your potential used truck for signs of excessive rust, dents or holes, leaking differentials, transfer case leaks and oil or coolant leaks from the engine.

Ensure the vehicle's four-wheel drive system (if equipped) can be shifted between its various modes as outlined in the owner's manual. Check the engine oil level and condition, as some owners have reported oil consumption issues. Avoid a model that's low on oil, or with engine oil that looks dirty or burned.

Engine

A V6 engine, as well as numerous V8 engines, could be specified for Silverado models. Automatic or manual transmissions and two or four-wheel drive were also available, depending on the model in question.

What Owners Like

Owners note a roomy cabin, confident passing and towing power, a pleasing ride and a solid, heavy-duty feel. Mileage is often rated highly too — particularly on the 4.8L and 5.3L-powered models. Many owners say their Silverado "tows like a dream."

What Owners Dislike

A more positive and precise brake-pedal feel, a better standard audio system, and higher-quality interior trim are on the wish-lists of many owners.

Verdict

A careful test drive and inspection from a GM-trained mechanic familiar with Silverado's potential issues should be considered mandatory. A healthy last-generation model appears ideal for those after proven performance, comfort and confident towing.

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HONDA

*1.99% APR purchase financing is available on a new 2012 Honda Civic Sedan DX 5MT model FB2E2CEX and 2012 Honda Civic 4D LX 5MT model FB2E4CEX. 84-month term available on 2012 Honda Civic Sedan DX 5MT model FB2E2CEX and 2012 Honda Civic 4D LX 5MT model FB2E4CEX. Based on a representative agreement using an offered pricing of $16,473.68+$39.235 for the new 2012 Honda Civic Sedan DX 5MT model FB2E2CEX / 2012 Honda Civic 4D LX 5MT model FB2E4CEX with a financed amount of $16,473.68 / $19,235, downpayment is $0, monthly payment is $97 / $113.35, total finance obligation is $17,668.56 / $20,629.70. Offer includes Freight & PDI. Taxes and levies are extra. #Using a finance price of $16,473.68 for a 2012 Honda Civic Sedan DX 5MT model FB2E2CEX at a rate of 1.99% APR, the cost of borrowing for an 84 month term is $1,194.88. bi-weekly payment is $97, total finance obligation is $17,688.56. Finance price includes freight & PDI. Taxes are extra and required at the time of purchase. Other terms available and vary by model. Finance term available only through Honda Canada Finance Inc. **The advertised MSRP of $16,485 2012 Honda Civic Sedan DX 5MT model FB2E2CEX includes freight & PDI, plus a cash discount of $11.32. The selling price adjustment applies to the purchase and is deducted from the negotiated pre-tax price and cannot be combined with subsidized purchase financing or leasing rates. All prices include freight & PDI of $1,495, PPSA, license, insurance, taxes, and other dealer charges are extra and may be required at the time of purchase. Dealer may sell for less. Dealer trade may be necessary on certain vehicles. Finance on approved credit for qualified customers only. †Step up financing cost is based on the Civic 4D LX 5MT model FB2E4CEX. Bi-weekly payment is $113.35 not including taxes and levies. #/**/†Offers valid from April 1st, 2012 through April 30th, 2012 at participating Honda retailers. Offers valid only for British Columbia residents at BC Honda Dealers locations. Offers subject to change or cancellation without notice. Terms and conditions apply. Visit www.bchonda.com or see your Honda retailer for full details.

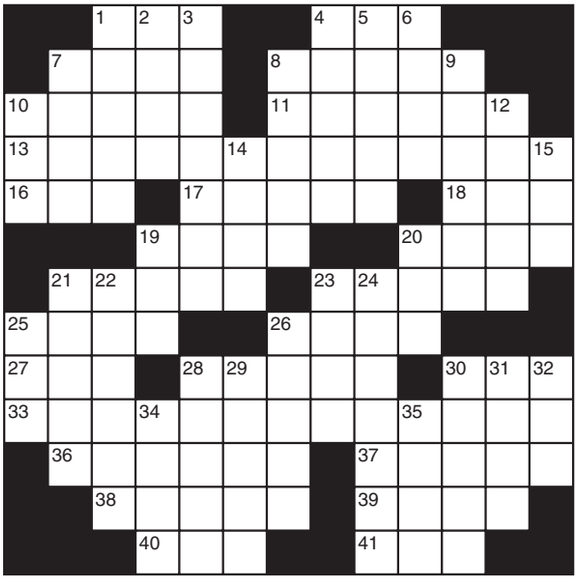
Crossword

Across

1 Hosiery shade
4 College stat
7 Met melody
8 BBQ load
10 Part of the flora
11 Juicy bit of gossip
13 It sucks
16 Attempt
17 Pay increase
18 Rotation duration
19 Count counterpart
20 Create
21 Resided
23 Exposes
25 Welsh veggie
26 Strictly entre —
27 Recede
28 Detroit team
30 Springtime abbr.
33 Thermoses
36 Impish one
37 Burst forth
38 Become one
39 Spectacles selection
40 Witness
41 Type measures

Down

1 Frequent Hepburn co-star
2 Japanese indigene
3 Neither sharp nor flat
4 Soccer scores
5 Cole Porter subject
6 — Romeo
7 Winged
8 Beany's pal
9 Soda-shop treat
10 Beetle Bailey's rank (Abbr.)
12 Plumbing problems
14 Shopping center
15 "Catcher in the —"
19 Comic-strip squeal
20 "— Doubtfire"
21 Preclude
22 PC pic producer
23 U2 lead singer
24 Spartan
25 Pentateuch bk.
26 Aristocratic
28 Money, especially when "filthy"
29 Mirror's offering
30 Graduates
31 Energizes, with "up"
32 Queue after Q
34 Works with
35 Spruce



Sudoku

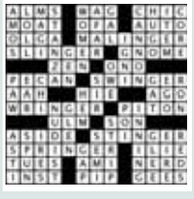
		6	4			3		
7	8			3	2			
9			7				4	
2				4				3
		9				1		
8				6				9
	1				7			8
			8	1			2	5
		8			9	6		

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's Sudoku

8	5	3	1	7	6	9	2	4
7	4	9	3	2	5	1	6	8
1	6	2	4	9	8	3	7	5
3	7	1	8	6	2	5	4	9
6	2	5	9	3	4	7	8	1
4	9	8	5	1	7	2	3	6
2	8	4	7	5	9	6	1	3
9	3	7	6	4	1	8	5	2
5	1	6	2	8	3	4	9	7

Yesterday's Crossword



Cryptoquip

How to play
This is a substitution cipher where one letter stands for another. Eg: If X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle.

ZH HMA BKK, Z LTXRM KI DNRYAC BALOZF DAOA TXZFMZVACEQ GEZQNXJ Z JZVA KI FHONGA GKYAO.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINGER JOHNNY AND COMIC JIM SHOULD'VE BEGUN A BUSINESS, GIVING IT THE TITLE CASH AND CARREY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals Z

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

Today 10°/7° Rain 90%
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Horoscope

Aries | March 21 - April 20. Just because someone is acting strangely does not mean they are up to no good.

Taurus | April 21 - May 21. The only thing you can be sure of is that you can't be sure of anything. If you keep that fact in mind at all times today, you'll do OK.

Gemini | May 22 - June 20. If you make a friend or family member a promise today make sure you are in a position to deliver.

Cancer | June 21 - July 22. No one expects you to be on top of your game every minute of every day, so why expect it of yourself?

Leo | July 23 - Aug. 22. People will pat you on the back and tell you what a great job you are doing. What you do today will be brilliant too.

Virgo | Aug. 23 - Sept. 22. You may find it hard to take someone seriously today but you must take what they tell you seriously.

Libra | Sept. 23 - Oct. 22. Something you hear will upset you today. It isn't aimed at you personally, so why be put out by it?

Scorpio | Oct. 23 - Nov. 21. You possess an unshakable belief in your own abilities. But you don't seem to understand why others have doubts about you. Make it your business to find out.

Sagittarius | Nov. 22 - Dec. 21. You may not see how the changes taking place in your world are for the best, but they are.

Capricorn | Dec. 22 - Jan 20. It's OK to visualize where you want to be ten years from now but it's what you do each and every day that builds the future.

Aquarius | Jan. 21 - Feb 18. You may be unhappy with a certain situation but it would be unwise to give up on it now.

Pisces | Feb. 19 - March 20. You are smart enough to find your own way out of a difficult situation but why not get some assistance?

SALLY BROMPTON

Caption Contest

"Till death do us part?"
Emily

YVES LOGGHE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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